All Emotions Matter:
A Literature-Based Exploration into the Value of Emotions that can have Negative Connotations in Today's World.

M. A. in Counselling Studies

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Abstract

This research explores the value of integrating all emotions for well-being, including those that can have negative connotations in today's world. Contemporary Western culture, possibly influenced by the positive psychology movement, has placed emphasis on the pursuit of happiness. Emotions that may be classified as negative can be rejected, distorted or denied as they may be viewed as undesirable or harmful. This study has the potential to contribute to the understanding of the vital functions that emotions with negative connotations can serve. The basic emotions of anger and sadness are highlighted for closer examination. The study is literature-based using thematic analysis as the qualitative research method. The key findings indicate support for emotions with negative connotations such as anger and sadness making a constructive contribution to the maintenance of healthy, close interpersonal relationships. Influences on how emotions are experienced and expressed are diverse and can include the following: biological, historical, cultural, social and gender role stereotypes. Assertively expressing emotions can be beneficial whereas chronic suppression may be detrimental to health and well-being. The ability to choose flexibly between both expression and suppression of emotions is the most valuable approach, depending on the context, relationship and the individual. The main conclusion drawn from the study is that the experience and expression of emotions that can have negative connotations can contribute to our health and well-being, when used intelligently. This dissertation recommends promoting the potential value of emotions that can have negative connotations through emotional intelligence competencies, emotion regulation and therapy.

Key words: emotions; negative; value; well-being; expression; suppression; gender; relationships.

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of any qualification or course.

Signed……

Date……

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Finally, my gratitude to the many researchers whose enthusiasm and dedication to their chosen field has allowed me to gain a fuller understanding of the wonderful, valuable and complex phenomena that is emotion.

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Dedication

For my parents, the late Ruskin and Evelyn Lewis who taught me the value of education.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter discusses:

- Background
- Research focus
- Research aim and objectives
- Research question
- Value of the study
- Structure of the study

Background

I began my research journey intending to study the phenomena of happiness. “I just want to be happy” is a response many people give when asked what they really want in life (Atkinson, 2011; Baylis, 2009; Harris, 2008). This is also my professional experience as a counsellor when I ask clients what they would like to get out of counselling. This led me to explore the recent contribution of positive psychology. In 2000, psychologists Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi argued that psychology needed to move away from just concentrating on being problem-focused, to include a strength-based positive focus. This resulted in the formation of the positive psychology movement (Seligman, 2003). Placing the phenomena of happiness as its central theme, it has been a field of rapid growth resulting in increased research (David, Boniwell & Ayers, 2013). Seligman, in his later book (2011, p. 12,) writes how his thinking evolved from seeing happiness as the central focus of positive psychology to that of well-being, therefore refining his previous theory to his Well-Being Theory.

Having immersed myself in this literature over time, I have appreciated its stance. However, I have also thought that vital dimensions are missing from the promotion of happiness and positivity. Kashdan and Biswas-Diener (2014, p. xii), both positive psychologists, write that they became increasingly disenchanted with the "gung-ho happiology" that they frequently observed. They describe it as shifting from promoting "positive experiences as important, to a kind of smiling fascism". Van Deurzen (2009), whilst acknowledging that the authors of positive psychology have made a valuable contribution, asserts that it is a mistake to fail to integrate the negatives of life. She warns that "eliminating the negatives only strengthens the dark side". Denied or unexpressed negativity builds internally until it can no longer be contained, and "explodes back into our lives in a different guise" (p. 75). This is my experience both as a therapist and as a person.

Parrott (2014, p. x) suggests that recent research indicates "that negative emotions do have value" and to avoid them "would require disengagement or denial" (p. 292). Kashdan and Biswas-Diener (2014, p. 197) argue that available research shows it is time to reassess "long-held beliefs about what is positive and what is negative, psychologically speaking". Both are important to "what it means to be mentally healthy and successful". My personal view of happiness is that it is not growthful to foster a false 'Pollyanna' attitude that denies very real painful and conflicting feelings. It is one part of the essential whole of what it means to be human and to experience the whole range of emotions, including sadness, anger, fear, joy and love. I view all emotions as necessary communications from our real self, acting as our internal compass. Holding the whole spectrum of emotions in mind, I would like to interrogate the literature for potential support that demonstrates the importance to well-being of integrating all emotions, including those that can have negative connotations.

Research focus

I have chosen to do a literature-based study as opposed to a field study. This will give me a wider knowledge base to review what the established and contemporary literature is saying about the spectrum of emotions, particularly those that can have negative connotations. The study begins with an overview of the broader field of emotion theory and research, to set the context for the focus of the study. The evaluation of emotions as positive and/or negative are explored. The emotions that are categorized as negative are identified, focusing on anger and sadness for the purpose of the study. The literature collected is analysed for the impact of excluding and/or integrating these emotions for well-being. The findings are interpreted and discussed. Implications and recommendations are suggested.

Research aim and objectives

The overall aim of this research is to advance an understanding of the value of emotions that can have negative connotations in today's world. The objectives are:

- To explore the value of emotions
- To identify the emotions that can have negative connotations currently
- To examine the impact of excluding these emotions
- To consider the value of integrating all emotions for well-being

Research question

What potential support is there for the integration of all emotions for well-being, including those that can have negative connotations?

Value of the study

With the recent cultural emphasis on the pursuit of happiness, this area appears to be neglected. The impact of not valuing and integrating emotions that can be viewed as negative can be detrimental to well-being. There seems to be fairly widespread denial or

suppression of such emotions; this is my experience as a therapist. It is hoped that this research contributes to the benefit of others by promoting awareness, dialogue and process about the value of all emotions.

Structure of the study

The next chapter (Chapter 2) describes the philosophical perspective (methodology) and method of the research. It also includes ethical considerations, validity and the limitations of the research. Chapter 3 gives a background context to all emotions. Chapter 4-5 discusses the research findings for anger and sadness respectively. Chapter 6 compares the findings and discusses implications. Chapter 7 concludes with a summary of the study, suggestions for further research and a reflexive account.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This chapter discusses:

- Introduction
- Philosophical perspective – ontology, epistemology, methodology
- Method – thematic analysis, reflexivity
- Data collection
- Inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Data analysis
- Ethical considerations
- Validity and trustworthiness
- Limitations

Introduction

My motivation to study the emotions that can have negative connotations feels like what Mintz (2010, p. 3) describes as a “burning issue”, arising from personal experience and therapeutic practice. McLeod (2003, p. 4) writes that “research grows out of the primary human tendency or need to learn, to know, to solve problems”. Whilst it is important that any researcher has passion for their chosen focus, many authors in the field emphasize the need for the researcher to be clear to the reader what their underpinning philosophy is, as this will clearly influence the writing (Braun & Clarke, 2006; McLeod, 2011; Willig, 2013.). Cresswell (2009) highlights the importance of the researcher stating the philosophical ideas they support from the outset, as it can help illuminate why certain choices of design, strategies and method have been taken along the way.

Philosophical Perspective

As I began my research journey, I became aware that research does not happen in a vacuum and that it has its roots in areas such as philosophy, science, history and politics. I could not just pick a research method off the shelf with a one-size-fits-all. Grappling with the literature written about the roots and approaches to research has been very perplexing. It has been a struggle to understand the very different worldviews; I have experienced them as confusing, contradictory and at times, complex. However, through the research experience, I now understand how these foundations are always present in my chosen research path. Understanding philosophical perspectives can illuminate how our research and methodology sits within "important wider debates and processes" (Carey, 2012, p. 78).

- Ontology

At the root of research is ontology and epistemology. Put simply ontology is the study of "what is the nature of reality?" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 12), "what is existence?" (Thomas, G., 2009, p. 86) or broader questions such as "why do we exist?" (Elliott, cited in Carey, 2012, p. 79). Willig (2013, p. 12) asserts that the "question driving ontology is 'what is there to know?'", "that ontological concerns are fundamental" and that it is inevitable that some assumptions are made about the nature of the world. Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 26) offer an 'ontology continuum'. This ranges from 'realism', described as "a pre-social reality that exists", to 'relativism' where "reality is dependent on the ways we come to know it." Harper (2012, p. 87) writes that the realist position holds that the data collected reflects reality, whereas the relativist position holds that there are many interpretations of the same data that are valid, and therefore not seen as "directly mirroring reality". As a person and as a humanistic therapist my philosophy accords with the relativist position.

- Epistemology

Howitt and Cramer (2011) write that epistemology is a branch of philosophy concerning the study of, or theory of knowledge. It endeavours to address “How, and what, can we know?” (Willig, 2013 p. 4). Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 29) suggest that “a realist epistemological position assumes that it is possible to obtain ‘the truth’ through valid knowledge production”. However, “a relativist epistemological position states that theoretically, knowledge is always perspectival and therefore a singular, absolute truth is impossible”. This resonates with me as I struggle with the idea of a fixed reality. Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011, pp. 98-115) present a very comprehensive set of tables outlining the ontology, epistemology and methodology of the different worldviews for consideration. This is helpful to the novice researcher like myself as it charts clearly the similarities and differences between the main approaches. Willig (2012, p. 10) offers three epistemological positions for qualitative researchers, defined by their set of assumptions about knowledge. The three types of knowledge suggested are realist, phenomenological and social constructionist. My epistemic position lies within phenomenology and social construction. This reflects my current worldview that the social and psychological world is diverse experientially, and socially constructed. However, I am mindful of not taking a fixed position, that I am always in process and that nothing is certain, “knowledge is a frail thing” (Thomas, G., 2009, p. 87).

- Methodology

As a therapist I would describe myself currently as integrative, using a relational model as a framework. At the centre of the model is the basic belief that relationships are fundamental to human experience and therapeutic work (Khan, 1997). My philosophy of human nature accords with the humanistic approaches, viewing people as valuable, social, constructive, creative and continually in process towards actualizing their potential. A qualitative approach to research is concordant with my philosophy, in that it values subjectivity,

intuition, meaning, process, experiential, reflexivity and complexity, amongst others (Sanders & Wilkins, 2010, p. 10). It is also the most appropriate methodology for researching the complex phenomena of emotions that I have chosen to study. Braun and Clarke (2013) suggest that really understanding the theory comes from the process of doing it. The philosophical approaches within qualitative research that have relevance to my research are phenomenology, hermeneutics and social constructionism.

Cresswell (2009, p. 13) defines phenomenological research as "a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experience about a phenomenon, as described by participants. Understanding the lived experiences marks phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method…". Integral to the investigation is the researcher's ability to set aside their own views on the phenomena in question, this process is called epoche (Katz, cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123). They write that the empathic stance of the researcher is referred to as "indwelling" (p. 25). A hermeneutic approach takes the "opposite tack" in that "understanding is always from a perspective, always a matter for interpretation" (McLeod, 2001, p. 56). He describes the tension between the two approaches. McLeod (2001, p. 58) writes that whilst both are about the development of understanding, "phenomenologists argue that their method of 'bracketing' allows them to note but then lay aside existing interpretive frameworks, in order to gain access to a truth that lies beyond these frameworks…". "From a hermeneutic perspective … to be human is to live in an 'interpreted world', a world in which experience is constructed in terms of language". He considers that any qualitative method of research involves the use of them both for constructing meaning and, depending on the research focus, it's about getting the balance right between the two approaches. A social constructionist approach proposes that "human experience, including perception, is mediated historically, culturally, and linguistically" (Willig, 2013, p. 7). She suggests that this research "is concerned with identifying the various ways of constructing social reality that are available in a culture, to

explore the conditions of their use, and to trace their implications for human experience and social practice". With this approach there are "knowledges rather than knowledge". The focus of this study has been literature-based, drawing predominantly from the hermeneutic and social construction perspectives.

Method

- Thematic Analysis

I chose thematic analysis as the method of qualitative research because it best suited my research question. It is acknowledged as a valuable 'foundational' method for a novice researcher such as myself (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Howitt & Cramer, 2011). It has been described as "flexible, straightforward and accessible" (McLeod, 2011, p. 146); this matches my experience of it being a very 'user-friendly' method to achieve my research goal. The process of thematic analysis requires the identification of themes emerging from close examination of the data collected. These emerging themes become the focus of the analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). How the data was collected and analysed has been outlined in the next sections (see also Appendices B – I). The only pre-determined/deductive categories used for the search were 'anger' and 'sadness', and key words relating to the research question such as 'well-being', 'health', 'positive benefits', 'emotion'. From this point my research took an inductive approach (Willig, 2013) allowing the themes to emerge from the data collected. Braun and Clarke (2006) challenge the notion of the themes just 'emerging'. They highlight the active role of the researcher driving the selection of what is identified, labelled and reported. The choice of thematic analysis has been most effective as the research method for this study. Because of its theoretical flexibility, it has been a suitable approach for the research question and my epistemic position of residing within phenomenology and social construction. Etherington (2004, p. 71) writes that when embarking on a research journey she needs to "find ways of working

that fits with who I am: my underlying values, my philosophies of life, my views of reality and my beliefs about how knowledge is known and created". This resonates with me and I was aware that my decision to conduct a study of the literature rather than a study of persons, had potential to isolate me from engaging with others on my journey. The contact and relationships I have had with my supervisor, peer group and my family has been essential sustenance along the way.

- Reflexivity

Willig (2013, p. 7), citing feminist critics, asserts that "the researcher's identity and standpoint do fundamentally shape the research process and the findings" and that this occurs 'both as a person and as a theorist'. Awareness of the personal impact on the process requires the researcher to develop critical reflexivity (McLeod, 2001; Sanders & Wilkins, 2010; Willig, 2013). Reflexivity is a tool that helps qualitative researchers use critical self-reflection on their own influences, and "demands acknowledgement of how researchers (co-)construct their research findings" (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. ix). The researcher's personal influence is an acknowledged and implicit part of qualitative inquiry (Mintz, 2010). As a therapist a considerable degree of self-awareness and reflection is vital; reflexivity for me builds on this, developing a critical observation of my own motivations and influences in the research process, and endeavouring to be as transparent as possible. "This means interpreting one's own interpretations" (Etherington, 2004, p. 32). Gough (2003, p. 25) advocates the keeping of a research diary for the development of thinking, ideas and feelings. Please see a summary of my reflexive account in the conclusion chapter (Chapter 7) and also Appendix A for an extract from the diary.

Data Collection

The data collection for the literature-based study was drawn from established and contemporary literature. Databases selected were based on suitability for a counselling

research study. These include SocINDEX, IBSS, CINAHL, Web of Science, Wiley Online, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, CPJ, EThOS, ChesterRep and the University Advanced Library Search. From the beginning it became apparent that researching the topic of emotions would involve an immense body of literature to select from. For example, I had 26,074 results when I searched for “negative emotions” and 13,500 for “positive emotions” on Science Direct. Key search terms were taken from the research title and question, for example: well-being, value, positive/negative, emotion, anger/sadness. Alternative terms were used when required. The Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT were used to widen or narrow searches. The main sources of information were papers and articles in academic and professional journals, edited books, theses and dissertations. The reference lists of pertinent articles and books were also a considerable source for further literature, this is termed snowballing (McLeod, 2011). Please see Appendices B, C and D for a fuller data collection account and the results of the database searches.

I am mindful that from the moment I selected terms to put into the search engine that I was influencing the research. Hart (1998) reminds us that method is not separated from methodology, so my own epistemological stance influences the shape of the research. Sanders and Wilkins (2010, p. 29) argue that “all research and data collections have a social and political context” and that it is our duty to collect data that adheres to professional and research ethics.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

For this research the sample is the literature rather than people.

It includes:

- theory and research of emotions
- theory and research of emotions with negative connotations
- theory and research comparing different perspectives on the phenomena

- peer-reviewed journals and books
- literature in English or translated into English
- qualitative, meta-analyses and mixed methods research
- no restriction dates

It excludes:

- negative emotions other than anger and sadness
- areas such as the physiological or the neurological
- the population diagnosed with severe and enduring mental distress
- children and young people under eighteen years of age

Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87, Table 1) suggest six phases to undertaking thematic analysis, these include: “familiarizing yourself with your data; generating codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; producing the report”. They emphasize that they are not prescriptive and can be used flexibly. I have used the basic principles suggested and adapted them to the needs of the study.

Owing to the limits of the dissertation, the research has focused on anger and sadness as representatives of commonly viewed negative emotions. The analysis began with the chapter on anger. The data collection had yielded 93 research papers and 15 books/chapters. The first phase was to familiarize myself with the data. In the next phase I began to generate initial categories, drawing on the title and the abstract of the hard copies. Colour codes for a group of related potential themes were applied for ease of categorizing (Appendix E). Carey (2012, p. 64) stresses the importance of the skill of critique when reviewing literature and asserts that it is a central component of analysis. He cites Aveyard

(2010) who identifies two related question: “does it answer the research question?” and “is it of high enough quality to include?”. It was important to keep these in mind during the process to avoid dissertation ‘drift’.

The third phase involved searching for themes. This entailed immersing myself in the data, reading the papers in depth to gain an understanding of individual research findings and an overview of the data corpus. This more in-depth process enabled me to draw explicit and implicit meaning from the data. To assist me in labelling and categorizing the data, I wrote key phrases in the margins throughout, using different colour pens and post-its (Appendix F). This ‘at a glance’ coding system proved to be most valuable throughout the whole process, as often a research paper would cover several potential themes that figured later in the process. The refinement process resulted in themes emerging that had not been apparent at the first phase of sorting. Of note was that issues about relationships emerged as a new and overarching theme (Appendix G). I noted that I felt excited at this unexpected find. In total 20 ‘candidate’ themes were identified in this third phase; this was an increase of 7 potential themes from the original 13 identified in the first sort. The next phases were about reviewing and naming the themes with concise terms, as in each category there still contained a broad spectrum within the label.

The same process was conducted with the data collected for the chapter on sadness. The data collection had yielded 140 research papers and 16 books/chapters. Apart from one theme, I noted that the categories and candidate themes remained the same from the first sort to the second more refined in-depth process (Appendix H). I felt this reflected the experience I had gained from analysing the data for the anger chapter.

The final phase was to write an ‘analytic narrative’. Even during this writing phase themes merged and emerged, for example, gender emerged as a significant theme. Overarching themes identified across both the anger and sadness data set include relationships, gender,

and expression/suppression of anger/sadness. Some themes had sub-themes not immediately apparent, for example; issues of power emerged from the data on gender. For a theme to be presented in the narrative, it needed to have enough data to justify its place in the research. Joffe (2012) writes that a quality thematic analysis needs to describe most of the data set collected. Within the limits of the dissertation I endeavoured to represent much of the findings within a coherent whole. Several themes were not included because of the limitations, for example: social implications; strategies for well-being; anger linked with fear and shame. The identified themes are fully explored in Chapters 4 and 5. Please see Appendix I for the colour coding of the themes in the data corpus.

Ethical considerations

As a therapist I endorse and am bound by the *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions,* British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP, 2018). As my research is literature-based rather than a field study, the characteristics from the framework I feel to be the most pertinent are the following selected values, principles and personal moral qualities.

- The values include: enhancing people's wellbeing and capabilities; improving the quality of relationships between people; appreciating the variety of human experience and culture; enhancing the quality of professional knowledge and its application.
- The principles include: justice, self-respect and being trustworthy.
- The personal moral qualities include: sincerity, integrity, respect, humility, fairness and wisdom (pp. 8-11).

Referring to research, the framework states "when undertaking research, we will be rigorously attentive to the quality and integrity of the research process, the knowledge claims

arising from the research, and how the results are disseminated" (p. 34). Being ethically mindful and accountable is essential to good practice as a therapist; it is also a way of being.

The *Ethical Guidelines for Research in the Counselling Professions* (BACP, 2019, pp. 13-15) outlines a summary of commitments to ethical research that include the following: trustworthy, respect, integrity, safety, quality and rigour. Appendix D (pp. 111-112) offers a comprehensive Code of Practice Research Checklist; this is a very useful reminder before conducting, during and when finishing the research study. As a novice researcher this ensures that I do not inadvertently neglect good practice.

McLeod (2003) reminds us that we are members of a research community, and that we have a "moral duty" to acknowledge and stay true to authors' writings when referring to their work. It is also important to acknowledge those people who have personally helped us in the process of doing the research. He emphasizes the "social responsibility of the researcher", keeping in mind that "the ultimate moral justification for research is that it makes a contribution to a greater public good by easing suffering or promoting truth" (p. 175). I acknowledge the importance of this wisdom and I have endeavoured to meet these commitments with sincerity.

Etherington (2004, p. 83) cites Ely, Vintz, Downing and Anzul's, 1997, observation that "qualitative writing by its nature involves the Self too intimately to ignore wounds, scars, and hard-won understandings that are to some degree part of our baggage". During the process of the research journey I have felt sufficiently grounded and taken care of myself along the way.

Validity and Trustworthiness

Many of the concepts of validity and reliability suitable for quantitative studies are not appropriate for qualitative research (McLeod, 2003). McLeod (2003, p. 93) cites Lincoln and Guba, 1989, who "have argued that qualitative studies should be judged on the basis of their

trustworthiness" which include four components: "dependability; confirmability; credibility and transferability". Willig (2013, p. 24) defines validity as "the extent to which our research describes, measures or explains what it aims to describe, measure or explain". It is important on a long research journey to keep coming back to the 'map' of the research aims and objectives, in order to deliver a study that is relevant to the research question.

Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999, p. 220) consider 'publishability guidelines' that can be shared by both quantitative and qualitative approaches. These include "explicit scientific context and purpose; appropriate methods; respect for participants; specification of methods; appropriate discussion; clarity of presentation; [and] contribution to knowledge". In this chapter I have described the purpose, context, rationale, methodology and method that the research is built upon. However, as the study is literature-based, I have translated the respect for participants into respect for the authors of the research studies I have gathered. In Chapters 4-6 I have presented and discussed the findings as accurately as I can. It is hoped that I have offered clarity of expression and that the research has contributed to knowledge.

Elliot et al. (1999, p. 220) also offer specific guidelines relevant to qualitative studies. These include "owning one's perspective; situating the sample; grounding the examples; providing credibility checks; coherence; accomplishing general vs specific research tasks [and] resonating with readers". I have endeavoured from the outset to share with the reader the perspective/bias I have brought to the research. Embracing reflexivity assists in this process as discussed previously. I have situated the sample by clarifying inclusion and exclusion criteria for the data selected. Through the description of the data collection, data analysis and the accompanying appendices, I have striven to account for the process of the method of thematic analysis used in the research. In presenting the findings, I have offered contrasting viewpoints so that the reader can get a sense of the debate about the issues and themes highlighted. I have outlined above what McLeod (1999, p. 18) calls 'descriptive

validity'. He also offers the notion of 'personal validity'. He writes that if the researcher has conveyed enough information about their personal engagement, the reader is able to judge the "authenticity, ownership and personal integrity" of the researcher.

Limitations

Studying the phenomena of emotion, with a huge volume of available data from different disciplines, was daunting at times. Decisions had to be made as to what could be included in a time-limited, small-scale project. It was frustrating to leave important areas out of the study, for example: social influences; religious influences; child development. I was aware that in needing to select and limit the focus of the study I was influencing the scope of the study. As the researcher, it is inevitable that I bring my personal interpretation to the process however much I strive for 'epoche'.

I had hoped to study several emotions that can have negative connotations, but to do justice to these complex emotions within the limits of the dissertation, I chose anger and sadness as the two key examples.

The use of language/linguistics and interpretation were factors that emerged throughout the whole process. There are potentially many words and ways to describe the phenomena, by different people and different cultures. Also, different terminology used by researchers from similar and diverse disciplines had the potential to cause confusion, for example: emotion, feeling, affect. Particularly when it came to everyday definitions of emotions such as anger and sadness, misunderstandings were also evident. In the interests of clarity, definitions are provided throughout the study.

As a novice researcher, I have had much to learn about the process and traditions of research. Although I endeavoured to digest the guidance available to me, I did not always fully grasp the meaning or significance of a procedure. For example, I understood the importance of keeping an account of how I collected and coded the data. I was careful to

keep several research records, also labelling and colour coding themes as they emerged. These strategies have been successful in terms of capturing the available data into cohesive themes, therefore meeting the aims of the study. However, the lesson learned is to keep even more detailed accounts of the process, in order to have a more comprehensive audit trail. Please see the sections in this chapter on data collection, data analysis and the appendices for an account of the process.

The next chapter explores the background to emotions, setting the context for the research.

Chapter 3

Background on Emotions

This chapter discusses:

- Introduction
- What is an emotion?
- What does the different terminology mean?
- How are emotions classified?
- What is the function of emotions?
- Appraisal
- Valence
- Summary
- Key points

Introduction

To explore the emotions that can have a negative connotation, I wish to set the research in a wider context before narrowing the focus to my chosen topic. This chapter covers questions such as 'What is an emotion?' 'How many emotions are there?' 'How do you classify them?' and 'what is the function of emotions?' These are research studies in themselves, but I wanted a brief overview of the field to orientate the reader and myself.

What is an emotion?

Emotions are central to what it is to be human and yet the concept is difficult to define precisely. Reading the literature it appears that even the simple and fundamental question 'What is an emotion?' has proved difficult to answer (Goleman, 1995; James, 1884; Solomon, 2008). Throughout history many writers from different disciplines have studied the nature of emotions. They have offered different insights and theories into what many

testify to being very complex phenomena (Ellis & Tucker, 2015; Izard, 1977; Stanley & Burrows, 2001). They involve complex processes that include the cognitive, the physiological, the social and cultural (Parrott, 2004). Izard (1977, p. 4) asserts that a complete definition needs to consider three components: "the experience or conscious feeling of emotion"; "brain and nervous system" processes; and "observable expressive patterns of emotion, particularly those on the face". Some writers believe that the term emotion is too 'heterogenous' a category to define (Griffiths, 1997; Oatley, Keltner & Jenkins, 2006). Stanley and Burrows (2001, p. 7. Figure 1.1) outline suggestions for the stages of an emotion. These include the following: detection and response to a stimulus/event; appraisal of its significance; emotional response consistent with the interpretation; subjective experience of the emotion; change in motivation; motivated behaviour and adaptive responses; and secondary appraisal.

What does the different terminology mean?

The *Collins Concise Dictionary* (1988) defines the word 'emotion' as "any strong feeling". The term derives from the Latin "emovere" meaning "that which moves us to action" (Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014, p. 7). Siegal (2009) emphasizes that the word emotion is not a noun but a verb. Parrott (2004) writes that the everyday use of the term 'emotion' covers a wide range of phenomena that differs from its use in academic psychology; he notes that researchers need to clarify more precisely their usage of the term, to distinguish them from 'folk conceptions'. Gross (2010, p. 212) argues that "the whole lexicon of emotion-related terms is in a bit of a jumble". This was my experience in trying to search for a clear definition of emotion and the differences between such terms as affect, feelings, moods and other related affective constructs. A term many scientists now use to describe related processes is 'affect' or 'affective science' (Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014). This can include emotions, moods, dispositions and personality. Oatley et al. (2006, p. 30) suggest a time course for the spectrum of affective phenomena ranging from emotions lasting a few seconds; moods

lasting hours, days or weeks; to personality traits that can be lifelong. Goleman (1995, p. 290) describes the different terminology as follows: “families of emotions” that have innumerable mutations, rippling out to more muted and longer lasting moods; temperaments where dispositions are readily evoked; and disorders where a person is “perpetually trapped in a toxic state”.

How are emotions classified?

How to classify emotions has been the subject of considerable debate by many researchers in the field over time. Viewpoints include theories about basic emotions, prototypes, and complex emotions. Whilst there is disagreement amongst basic emotion theorists as to some categories, the more commonly agreed of the basic, primary or fundamental emotions appear to be anger, disgust, fear, joy/happiness and sadness (Ekman, 1992; Griffiths, 2003; Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 1988). Their basis for inclusion are variously seen as the following: universal, hardwired, involve the face/body, relate to instincts and action tendencies, and are unlearned emotional states (Ortony & Turner, 1990). Ortony and Turner (1990) and Solomon (2002a) argue against the idea of any emotions being basic. Shweder (1994) and Wierzbicka (1986) contend that using terms from Western culture do not easily translate across languages, particularly when it comes to describing psychological states. Ortony and Turner (1990) whilst arguing that the study of emotions is not dependent on the notion of basic emotions, do suggest that they can be useful as a research strategy. They propose the idea that they are viewed more as basic ‘elements’ out of which different emotions are built.

Fehr and Russell (1984, p. 464) researched the idea that the concept of emotion could be better understood from a prototype perspective. They highlight that “membership in the concept of emotion is a matter of degree rather than all-or-none”. The prototype approach to categorization built on Rosch’s proposal about “fuzzy categories” (as cited in Tracy,

Robins & Tangney, 2007, p. 196) where there are “no clear ‘classical’ definitions based on necessary and sufficient features”. Averill (1994a, p. 8) reminds us of Wittgenstein’s comparison with “family resemblances” where a “family member may be more representative of the group than others, but not therefore more important, fundamental, etc., in any other respect”. Plutchik (as cited in Strongman, 2003, p. 66) proposes that emotion is multidimensional, consisting of similarity, polarity and intensity. He offers a conical shape in various colours and their shades to demonstrate the opposites, intensities and blends. A colourful flower-like two-dimensional diagram represents his grouping of 32 emotions (Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014, p. 37) (Appendix J). Ortony and Turner (1990, p. 321) challenge the idea of basic emotions being blended together to form new emotions. They argue that “different physiological reactions and other bodily concomitants” cannot be blended and “how would the phenomenology of the basic emotions be preserved in the derived emotion?” Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1988) assert that the many complex emotions that can be identified are not mixtures of basic emotions but derive from cognitive evaluations.

What is the function of emotions?

Many theorists and researchers agree that emotions fulfil a variety of functions (Averill, 1994b; Frijda, 1994; Keltner & Gross, 1999). However, this has not always been the case. Dating back to some classical philosophers, emotions have at times been viewed as disruptive, harmful, untrustworthy and to be avoided, allowing reason to be ‘the master’ (Keltner & Gross, 1999; Parrott, 2004). This legacy is still evident today where terms like ‘emotional’ can have negative connotations, whereas rational thought, logic and reason can imply the ‘desirable’ way to be. A further viewpoint is that historically, emotions did serve a function in the environment of human evolution but is no longer applicable in the present context (Keltner & Gross, 1999). However, in recent years there has been increasing attention given to the function that emotion serves by researchers from “many disciplines

and at many levels of analysis" (Parrott, 1999, p. 465). Functional accounts of emotions hold that they are adaptations to the challenges of physical and social survival: they are solutions to specific problems (Keltner & Gross, 1999). At the biological level they can prepare the body for action; at the cognitive level they can alter a person's priorities (Parrott, 2004) and at the social level they can have an "affiliation function" and a "social distancing function" (Fischer & Manstead, 2008, p. 457). Levenson (1999, p. 501) suggests that "it is impossible to account for all the functions of all of the emotions with a single unified theory". My own current view, based on my experience as a person and as a therapist, is that all emotions have a function. They provide necessary intelligence to us as humans, and I regard and respect them as 'teachers'. I also believe that "they clearly do have to be managed intelligently for people to benefit from their intelligence" (Greenberg, 2015, p. 17).

Appraisal

Appraisal is regarded by many as an essential ingredient in emotion (Lazarus, 1994; Scherer, 2009; Solomon & Stone, 2002). It can be defined as a cognitive "evaluation of an event according to a number of criteria. A set of appraisals determines what emotion, if any, is produced by the event" (Oatley et al., 2006, p. 412). A central concept of appraisal theory is that "people's emotions arise from their perceptions of their circumstances – immediate, imagined or remembered" (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003, p. 572). It is a person's interpretation of a situation, not the situation itself, that triggers one emotion rather than another (Siemer, Mauss & Gross, 2007). Siemer, Mauss and Gross (2007) propose that there are several dimensions to appraisal that can influence the process: event significance; responsible agent; expectedness; and control potential. Primary appraisals are automatic, fast, unconscious evaluations, resulting in rapid reactions of approach or avoidance (Lazarus, 1994). Secondary appraisals can be more conscious, deliberate and measured (Oatley et al., 2006). Critics of appraisal theory challenge whether emotions are caused by appraisals, arguing that there are multiple causes (Parrott, 2004). Parrott (2004, p. 13) maintains that

despite this debate many agree that “a person’s way of thinking” leads to “the emotions that person feels”.

Valence

Linked to appraisal is the concept of valence. The term comes from the Latin ‘valentia’ meaning power. In English it has historically been used in chemistry but entered use in psychology c. 1935 when Kurt Lewin’s writings were translated from German using the term valence to mean ‘charge’ (Colombetti, 2005). “Valence can be defined as the positive or negative ‘charge’ associated with a particular physical or mental state” or a combination of both (Charland, 2005a, p. 236). Charland suggests that many psychological and philosophical theories of emotion subscribe to the notion of individual emotions having valence, i.e., positive or negative. On reading the literature it is apparent that the evaluative notion of valence is commonly linked with a positive or negative judgement (Fossum & Barrett, 2000; Chen, Liu & Len, 2016; Tsai & Park, 2014). Van Kleef and Côtè (2014, p. 139) refer to it as a “pervasive tendency” and dispute this practice. Charland (2005b, p. 84) posits that the function of valence is evaluative, that it “is the moving force, the heat of emotion”. Zajonic (1980) comments that the positive and negative evaluation is fast, automatic, pre-cognitive and probably universal. “Through valence, we feel moved toward or away from things, in a manner that is accompanied by an experience of what those things mean to us personally” and “this personal meaning is what makes valence fundamentally evaluative and interpretative” (Charland, 2005a, p. 234).

Colombetti (2005) challenges the notion of valence having a positive-negative distinction, questioning the ambiguity of the original translation from German referred to above. He argues that the lack of clear definitions of the terms ’valence’, ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ over the years has led to “cross-definitions and cross-characterizations”, and that “the etymology of valence does not refer to any [such] polarity” (p. 104). He advises that “the dichotomous

notion of valence is a hindrance", simplifying and distorting what are "complex and integrated phenomena" (pp. 121-122). Solomon and Stone (2002) write that the positive-negative polarity or 'opposites' in emotion stretches back into history. They cite Aristotle pairing emotions into 'virtues' and 'vices', and the medieval Christian teachings of the seven virtues and seven 'deadly' sins. They assert that the bipolar framework is a pervasive legacy used frequently in "serious emotions research" and "common parlance" (pp. 417-418). Solomon (2002b) argues that if an emotion is multidimensional, it is difficult to reconcile polarity in even the simplest emotions. In contrast, Russell and Carroll (1999, p. 3) reviewing the data, suggest that the bipolarity offers a "parsimonious fit".

Summary

My own current position in this debate is that to classify emotion into simplistic positive-negative polarities does a great disservice to the complexity and subtlety of these amazing phenomena. Lerner and Keltner's research (2000, p. 476) proposes that "emotions serve an impressive co-ordination role; they trigger a set of responses (physiology, behaviour, experience and communication)" allowing an individual to react rapidly to threats or opportunities. How an individual interprets and responds to the experience of different emotions will be influenced by many factors including context, culture, history, upbringing, religion and worldview. "What is at stake is the variety and richness of our experiences, including the liberty to be uniquely and originally personal" (Colombetti, 2005, p. 123).

Key Points

- The concept of emotion is difficult to define precisely; the term can cover a wide range of phenomena.
- Emotions involve complex processes that include responses such as physiology, experience, behaviour and communication.

- The classification of emotions is the subject of considerable debate. For the purposes of this study the 'basic emotions' classification is used; these include anger, disgust, fear, joy and sadness.
- Emotions can be viewed as functional; they are solutions to specific problems.
- Appraisal/cognitive evaluation is viewed as an essential ingredient in emotion.
- The valence element of appraisal is evaluative and is commonly linked with a positive or negative judgement about individual emotions.
- The idea of a positive/negative bipolar framework is challenged, distorting what are complex and coalesced phenomena.
- Emotions such as anger and sadness are broadly universal but how an individual person experiences and expresses different emotions will be unique.

"Everyone knows what an emotion is, until asked to give a definition" (Fehr and Russell, 1984, p. 464).

The next two chapters discuss the findings of the research. The chapters focus on anger and sadness as they are commonly viewed as examples of emotions that can have negative connotations.

Research Findings

Introduction

Emotions commonly categorized as negative include the following: anger, disgust, fear, sadness and shame (Cordaro et al., 2018; Robinson, 2008). For the purpose of the study I have selected anger and sadness as they can represent different and contrasting functions. I am curious about both these fundamental and universal emotions being categorized as negative. This has led me to want to explore the literature to ascertain what potential support there is for the value of anger and sadness to our well-being. The following two chapters are my research findings exploring the potential value of these two emotions.

Chapter 4

Anger

This chapter discusses:

- Definitions and distinctions of anger
- Features of anger
- Different views of anger
- **Main themes** from the data analysis
    1) Relationships
        - Attachments styles
        - Close relationships
        - Workplace relationships
    2) Expression and suppression of anger
    3) Gender
- Summary

- Key points

Definitions and distinctions of anger

Anger can be described as the “prototypical negative emotion” (Hess, 2014, p. 55). Commonly available online dictionary definitions of anger include “A strong feeling of displeasure, hostility or antagonism towards someone or something, usually combined with an urge to harm” (Wiktionary, 2019). “A strong feeling that makes you want to hurt someone or be unpleasant because of something unfair or unkind has happened” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). The inclusion in the definitions of ‘an urge to harm/hurt’ implies a destructive aggression inherent in anger. Many clients have expressed to me their view that anger is unacceptable because they equate anger with aggression. Berkowitz (cited in Alschuler & Alschuler, 1984, p. 26) writes that aggression is “an overt, behavioural, destructive response” and not to confuse this with anger which is “an internal, autonomic reaction”. Anger does not necessarily lead to aggression/rage/violence (Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014) with some writers suggesting that only 10% use aggression (Kassinove & Tafrate cited in Lowenstein, 2004). Averill (1983, p. 1148), in his seminal research on anger and aggression, found that most responses from participants were non-aggressive, engaging in activities that calm (60%) or talking it through with the instigator (59%). If aggression did occur it was mostly symbolic or verbal; “direct physical aggression … occurs in only 10% of the episodes”. He concluded that the “typical episode of anger is not particularly aggressive”. This suggests that whilst anger may be a factor in aggression at times, the emotion of anger is not inextricably linked with aggression as can be sometimes assumed.

Features of anger

Most people experience mild to moderate anger on a regular basis (Averill, 1983; Berkowitz & Harmon-Jones, 2004). There are many varying descriptions of anger. Common features

of anger can include the following: “a response to a perceived misdeed” (Averill, 1983); frustration at personal goals being prevented (Izard, 1977; Lindenfield, 2000); a violation of rights (Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lerner, 1989); a feeling of being hurt (Alschuler & Alschuler, 1984; Lerner, 1989); a boundary invasion (Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Izard, 1977); something without consent or harmful to the person’s well-being (Izard, 1977; Taylor, 1975). This is not an exhaustive list but it catches the flavour of the functions of anger.

Other features of anger can include: it has a focus/object at which it is directed (Taylor, 1975); it is a process and a way of communication usually about social occurrences (Tavris, 1989); it is a motivating active force which can bring with it strength, power and energy to approach and to problem-solve (Averill, 1982; Parker Hall, 2009; Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson & O’Connor, 1987); it can be present in loss (Parker Hall, 2009), shame and guilt (Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher & Gramzow, 1992), and anxiety or fear (Carver & Harmon-Jones, 2009). Parker Hall (2009, p. 49) proposes that anger can be “unacknowledged in the ‘freeze’ category, turned against others in the ‘fight’ category and against the self in the ‘flight’ category”. The features outlined here are not conclusive but demonstrate the diversity and complexity of this emotion.

Different views on anger

In the history of Western culture there have been different trends in how anger is viewed. These range from viewing it as a Christian mortal sin to be eradicated, to the Aristotelian view that it “can be virtuous, appropriate and justifiable ethically” (*Nicomachean Ethics, Book 4,* cited in Potegal & Novaco, 2010, p. 18). Izard (1977) proposes that anger is an adaptive function from an evolutionary perspective. Averill (1983, p. 1146) argues that this biological view is at variance with a constructivist viewpoint and that “anger is a socially constructed syndrome”. Tavris (1989 p. 95) challenges this type of “dualist approach” maintaining that

"anger and its expression are a result of biology and culture, … mind and body". She asserts that "there are different angers, involving different processes and having different consequences to our mental and physical health. No single remedy fits all" (p. 22). Added to this each person brings their own lived experience, learning and cultural conditioning (Izard, 1977). Anger is neither simply positive or negative (Izard, 1977; Alschuler & Alschuler, 1984) but is an essential and universal emotion, worthy of further exploration as to how it can be used constructively for the benefit of our well-being. With this in mind the rest of this chapter will focus on the themes that emerged from the data analysis process.

Main themes from the data analysis

1) Relationships

The overarching theme to emerge from the data analysis process was that of relationships. Within the theme, attachment styles, close relationships and workplace relationships emerged as distinct sub-themes.

- Attachment styles

Relationships are fundamental to human experience and include relationships with the self, others and the environment. Anger is a means of communication and occurs mostly as a 'social event' (Tavris, 1989). The experience and assertive expression of anger can benefit relationships in that it offers feedback (Butler, Meloy-Miller, Seedall & Dicus, 2017). Butler, Meloy-Miller, Seedall and Dicus' (2017) proposed model asserts that "a person's view of self in relation to other" (SIRO) combined with a perception of threat, influences whether the pathway of anger is harmful or helpful (p. 1). This links with Bowlby's attachment theory (1973, p. 246) defining secure, anxious-ambivalent and avoidant styles of attachment. He views anger as a protest function, and depending on the nature of the attachment, proposes that a functional response is "the anger of hope", whereas a dysfunctional response is the "anger of despair". Functional anger is to promote and re-establish the attachment bond,

not to disrupt it. Mikulincer's research (1998) concurs with Bowlby's theory, linking the effect of different attachment styles on anger-proneness, expression, goals, actions and expected outcomes amongst others. He concludes that this offers helpful insight into "the emotional architecture and strategies of affect regulation related to a person's attachment style" (p. 521). This research suggests a strong link between the different attachment styles and whether an anger episode is functional or dysfunctional. The anger of despair or hope may have an influence as to whether the outcome of an episode is beneficial or not. This would appear to be an important distinction.

- Close relationships

Kassinove, Sukhodolsky, Tsytsarev and Solovyova's cross-cultural research (1997, p. 301) found that anger episodes mostly occurred "at home, during the afternoon or evening, and across all days of the week". It occurred as a result of a loved or liked person acting unpredictably. The episodes were usually verbal and did not involve aggression. That anger more frequently arises in close interpersonal relationships is highlighted by other researchers (Averill, 1983; Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Fehr, Baldwin, Collins, Patterson & Benditt, 1999). That it can bring about reaffirmation, reconciliation and relationship improvement emphasizes the potential functional nature of anger (Averill, 1983; Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Kuppens, Van Mechelen & Meulders, 2004). This supports the idea that anger can be used constructively, particularly in close relationships.

- Workplace relationships

Does this constructive use of anger in relationships extend to other contexts such as the workplace? Clark and Finkel's research (2005, p.170) looked at close versus business relationships, suggesting that different contexts such as these are "likely to be a potent determinant of expressing emotion [such as anger]". Fitness' (2000) research found that the power relationships between interactants were the most important factor in experiencing and expressing anger in the workplace. Tiedens (2001) research found that the expression

of anger can confer status on an individual who may be viewed as more competent and powerful. Tiedens writes that this can lead to an unpleasant and aggressive organizational culture. This suggests that role and status can influence whether anger can be used functionally or not. Callister, Geddes and Gibson's research (2017) found that workplace anger can promote healthy dialogue if the focus can be on problem-solving rather than defensive reactions and is handled with care. Stickney and Geddes' research (2014) found that employees who expressed anger contributed to an improvement in problem-solving. They assert that employee anger can be viewed as showing commitment to their role, colleagues and organization. This suggests that anger used constructively can enhance relationships and production in the workplace. It would require "effective management training and development" (Geddes & Callister, 2007, p. 740) and a fostering of trust, understanding and mutual respect within the workplace culture.

2) Expression and suppression of anger

Another significant theme to emerge from the data analysis process was related to the expression or suppression of anger. Which behavioural response selected will be influenced by the goals or intentions of the angered person (Tangney et al.,1996). Averill's research (1982, p. 196) proposes that there are three broad categories of motivation: malevolent; fractious and constructive. He defines malevolent motives as including "expressing dislike" and "associated with indirect aggression"; fractious motives include "to let off steam"; and constructive motives include "to strengthen a relationship". These motives appear to influence whether the pathway of anger is functional or dysfunctional. Some classical behavioural responses to anger commonly defined in the literature are the dichotomized distinction of 'anger-in' and 'anger-out' (Kuppens et al., 2004; Linden et al., 2003; Mikulincer, 1998). Anger-in refers to the suppression of anger's action tendency and anger-out refers to the overt expression of the action tendency (Davis, Woodman & Callow, 2010). The research of Linden et al (2003, p. 12) propose that these are limiting and identify a six-factor

model which includes “Direct Anger-Out, Assertion, Support-Seeking, Diffusion, Avoidance and Rumination”. O’Connor, Archer and Wu’s research (2001, p. 85) outlines five behaviours which include the similar categories of anger-in, anger-out, assertion, avoidance and indirect anger, and suggest that they are mutually exclusive. A pro-social behaviour proposed by Averill (1982) is that of reconciliation. These latter models appear to be much more comprehensive in their range of possible behaviours reflecting what is a complex emotion.

Doyle and Biaggio’s research (1981, p. 154) defines an assertive person as “possessing the ability to appropriately and constructively express his/her feelings”. The findings of their research suggest that people who are natural asserters are direct and at ease in expressing their anger. In contrast, low asserters are more covert, resulting in anger ‘leaking out’. They conclude that this may impact negatively on interpersonal communication. Fischer and Roseman (2007) posit that contempt can develop if anger is unexpressed particularly in non-intimate relationships. An aspect that can arise in suppression is the faking of feelings. Following society’s ‘feeling rules’ (Hothschild, 2012) or denying feelings can “create a sense of discrepancy between inner experience and outer expression, leading to feelings of inauthenticity” (Gross, Richards & John, 2006, p. 18). This can impact on close relationships and social contact (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2017; Gross et al., 2006; Páez, Martínez-Sánchez, Mendibura, Bobowik & Sevillano, 2013). Several writers emphasize that expressing anger is a signal to others about preferences and needs and is therefore important to interpersonal functioning (Gross & Levenson, 1997; Lench, Tibbett & Bench, 2016; Mikulincer, 1998). Gross and Levenson (1997, p. 102) assert that “suppression contributes to the emotional miscommunication evident in so many forms of psychopathology”. This suggests that the assertive expression of anger can contribute to the health and well-being of an individual, interpersonal relationships and potentially the workplace.

In contrast, Chervonsky and Hunt (2017) in their meta-analysis of the expression and suppression of emotion, found that whilst suppressing of emotion generally was linked with poor social well-being, they found that poorer social outcomes were linked with the expression of anger. In relation to the anger expression known as 'venting', it appears that the theory of catharsis or a ventilationist approach is no longer supported by evidence from research (Bushman, Baumeister & Phillips, 2001; Goleman, 1995; Thomas, S. P., 1990). Venting is viewed as unhelpful as it does not reduce anger, it maintains the anger experience and effectively acts as a rehearsal on how to behave aggressively (Bushman, 2002; Bushman, Baumeister & Stack, 1999). The effects of both anger-in and anger-out can be linked with various health issues including blood pressure, the immune system and cardiovascular disease (Suinn, 2001; Suls, 2013; Tafrate, Kassinove & Dundin, 2002). However, these assessments have largely focused on destructive anger; problem-solving assertive/constructive anger does not have the same association (Davidson, MacGregor, Stuhr, Dixon & MacLean, 2000). "Anger in moderation appears to be the ideal psychosomatic resolution" (Feshbach, 1986, p. 123). Clark and Finkel (2005) propose that any debate about whether it is better to express or suppress any emotion is too simplified. They argue that it is prudent to be flexible in the selection of either expression or suppression depending on the relationships and context. They link this ability with emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be described as knowing, using and managing your own emotions; "recognizing emotions in others" and "handling relationships" (Goleman, 1995, p. 43). Although there is some research to show that the outward expression of anger can have negative implications, equally there is research to show the benefits of expressing anger when used constructively.

3) Gender

A consistent sub-theme running through all the themes that emerged was gender. The research available on gender and emotion, and in particular anger, is substantial. A brief overview of the findings is presented here due to the limitations of the dissertation.

Shields (2002, p. 11) proposes a distinction between the terms “sex” and “gender”. She differentiates “between the biologically defined categories of female and male (sex) and the psychological features associated with biological states which involve social categories rather than biological categories (gender)”. Much of the research highlights that gender stereotypes are still prevalent, particularly with regards to anger (Plant, Hyde, Keltner, & Devine, 2000; Sharkin, 1993; Smith et al., 1989). Gender stereotypes refer to “the structured set of beliefs about the personal attributes of women and men” (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979, p. 219). The gendered stereotypical view of men that can still prevail is that they can be inexpressive emotionally, except for anger. Conversely, the stereotypical view of women is that they are expressive emotionally, except for anger (Sharkin, 1993; Shields, 2002; Smith et al., 1989). This is the view that has been prevalent in Western cultures (Fischer & Evers, 2011; Strongman, 2003; Wood & Eagly, 2002) and relates particularly to the expression of anger.

There appears to be considerable debate in the literature as to whether the experience and expression of anger fundamentally differs in men and women as a function of gender. A substantial body of research found few or no gender differences in the experience of anger (Averill, 1983; Kopper, 1993; Sharkin, 1993). In contrast, other researchers identified some differences alongside many similarities (Kassinove et al., 1997). However, it is in the domain of anger expression that researchers identify gender differences (Brody & Hall, 2000; Rivers, Brackett, Katulak & Salovey, 2007; Shields, 2002). Whilst acknowledging biological sex influences, there is a significant body of researchers that argue that emotions are social constructions (Averill, 1983; Brody, 1997; Ünal, 2000). It is asserted that the gender

differences in the expression of anger are influenced by the socialization process. Potential influences on gender role socialization are families, peers, work, media, institutions (Ünal, 2000). If as a result of socialization, for example, girls are discouraged from expressing anger as it is not viewed as 'feminine', but it is accepted in boys as anger is viewed as 'masculine', then it has the potential to translate into 'display rules'. These are "cultural norms regulating how, when and where emotions can be expressed by males and females in any particular culture" (Brody & Hall, 2008, p. 396). Stereotypical descriptions associated with the feminine gender role can include: nurturing, vulnerable, emotional, concerned with relationships and social support. Stereotypical descriptions associated with the male gender role can include assertive, strong, independent, rational (Kopper & Epperson, 1996; Smith et al., 1989; Timmers, Fischer & Manstead, 1998).

The issue of power emerges as an important factor, particularly in relationship to anger. Anger is viewed as having agency and "energy directed outwards" (Shields, 1987, p. 236). Tiedens' study (2001) found that people who expressed anger were seen as competent, dominant and powerful. Culturally, anger is largely viewed as a male emotion (Rivers et al., 2007; Sharkin, 1993; Shields, 1987). Women conforming to the gender role stereotype through suppression may experience feelings of powerlessness, or alternatively may risk social discrimination or rejection (Brody & Hall, 2008). Anger as a result of feeling powerless can result in long-term resentment and a feeling of victimization (Crawford, Kippax, Onyx, Gault & Benton, 1992). These findings suggest that whilst there does not appear to be a significant difference in gender experience of anger, gender expression of anger is influenced by social and cultural factors, resulting from gender role socialization. A particular feature relating to anger and gender is that of status and power. These findings have implications for both women and men regarding the pressure to conform to cultural 'norms'. It can generate expectations and become self-fulfilling prophecies (Hall & Briton, cited in Brody & Hall, 2008). It implies inequality and constraints for women in fully experiencing

and expressing what is a healthy emotion when used constructively. It has potential consequences to the health and well-being of both men and women in having to meet societal expectations. It appears that the Western cultural gender role stereotypes that may still prevail, seem to be in contradiction with anger as a potential healthy emotion and may contribute to it being viewed negatively. There are many positive benefits to women embracing and asserting their anger; they can include: signalling a need; stimulating energy for action and change; fostering intimacy/realness; empowerment; maintaining boundaries and health (Parker Hall, 2009, p. 48, Table 4.1). Crawford et al. (1992, p. 184) urge us to "encourage social representations of anger which separate it from aggression" and to challenge any representations that "reinforces the connection", as this misunderstanding may contribute to anger having a negative reputation.

Summary

Researching the benefits of anger warrants a more extensive study than can be achieved within the limits of this dissertation. It has not been possible to explore issues such as the following: cultural differences; the part anger can play in hiding more vulnerable feelings such as fear, loss, hurt and shame; the contribution that collective assertive anger can make to bring about change in the world through social movements such as women's rights, civil-rights and human rights (Tavris, 1989). Some of the data gathered for this study would facilitate exploration into areas that can nurture, develop and sustain an assertive/constructive approach to anger. This could include emotion regulation, education, early intervention, therapy, anger management, empathy, forgiveness, acceptance, narrating and expressive writing.

Key points

- Anger can be viewed as the archetypal negative emotion.
- Anger is not inextricably linked with aggression.

- It can be defined as a response to a perceived injustice and is an active, energetic force to approach and problem-solve.
- It is variously viewed as an adaptive function or a socially constructed occurrence.
- Anger can be used constructively, particularly in close relationships.
- Both expression and suppression of anger can be linked with poor health issues and poor social well-being.
- Assertive expression of anger can contribute to the good health and well-being of an individual and enhance personal relationships.
- Whilst there is little difference in gender experience of anger, gender expression is influenced by social and cultural factors.
- A prevalent stereotype is that anger is viewed largely as a male emotion. This links with status and power.

The data analysed for this study suggests that there is support in the literature for assertive/constructive anger contributing to health and well-being, particularly regarding interpersonal relationships. There are both negative and positive aspects to anger; the challenge is to develop an understanding of ourselves and others in relation to this complex emotion, to be able to respond flexibly and to keep a respectful 'here and now' balanced perspective.

> Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way that is not easy. (Aristotle cited in Kassinove & Tafrate, 2002, p. 68)

The next chapter explores the values of sadness. Also categorized as a negative emotion, sadness has been chosen along with anger as they represent different and contrasting functions.

Chapter 5

Sadness

This chapter discusses:

- Definitions and distinctions of sadness
- Different views of sadness
- **Main themes** from the data analysis
    1) Interpersonal benefits of sadness
    2) Crying
    3) Expression and suppression of sadness
    4) Music
    5) Gender
    6) Cognition, motivation and social behaviour
    7) Mixed emotions
    8) Loss of sadness
- Summary
- Key points

Definitions and distinctions of sadness

Findings from the data analysis suggest that sadness is a broadly universal and complex emotion. A facial expression of sadness is recognized in all ages and cultures (Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014). Sadness can be defined as a response to the irrevocable loss of an attachment relationship, a goal, an object or a valued part of the self (Freed & Mann, 2007; Bonnano, Goorin & Coifman, 2008). These losses can have consequences for an individuals' needs, problem-based coping and significant social connectedness (Schirmer, 2015). Although sadness is classified as an emotion which is a more intense, time-limited episode (Freed & Mann, 2007; Leventhal, 2008), some writers consider it a longer-lasting

emotion (Ekman, 2003) lasting days or weeks (Leventhal, 2008), or a mood which is less intense, more enduring and without a conscious trigger (Forgas, 2014; Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014). Grief is also associated with loss but can involve other difficult emotions and is an enduring state that can last for months or years (Bonnano et al., 2008; Leventhal, 2008). Depression has overlapping characteristics with sadness but is distinguished by negative cognition and behavioural features that are dysfunctional, disabling, long-lasting and recurring (Bonnano et al., 2008; Leventhal, 2008; Oatley et al., 2006).

Different views of sadness

Some writers assert that sadness has not been researched enough and that our understanding of the phenomena remains rudimentary (Barr-Zisowitz, 2004; Freed & Mann, 2007). Wierzbicka (1986) reminds us that basic emotions such as sadness might be universal but they are defined by an "English folk taxonomy", when what is needed is a "culture-independent semantic metalanguage" (p. 584). Sociologists acknowledge that the basic emotions are hardwired but social constructivists would argue that the expression of them is socially constructed (Stets & Turner, 2008). Currently in our Western culture sadness can be viewed as an uncomfortable, undesirable emotion to be eliminated (Forgas, 2014; Masman, 2009). However, sadness along with melancholia has been much more accepted and valued in previous periods of history, both being viewed as instructive and even ennobling (Barr-Zisowitz, 2004; Forgas, 2014; Forgas, 2017a). In contrast, sadness is valued highly in Iran, Sri Lanka and some Asian societies (Barr-Zisowitz, 2004). Sadness is missing from the vocabulary of the Chewong and Tahitian people, and merges with anger in the Ifaluk, Luganda and Illingot people (Ellis & Tucker, 2015). This suggests that whilst sadness is considered universal, the way people think about it is not. It is to the value of sadness in todays' world I now focus my research.

Main themes from the data analysis

1) Interpersonal benefits of sadness

A theme to emerge from the data analysis is that of the interpersonal benefits that sadness can bring. Although sadness can arise because of non-social loss, Leary (2015) found that two thirds of study participants cited the loss of a valued connection with another person as a trigger for sadness. He proposes that sadness motivates people to behave in ways that strengthen and sustain interpersonal relationships. It acts as a prompt to value friends and family, and to maintain social bonds (Gray, Ishii & Ambady, 2011). However, some theorists emphasize a seemingly opposite viewpoint, citing that a sad person is likely to be inactive and to withdraw socially, leading to conserving their remaining energy and resources (Gray et al., 2011; Nesse, 1990). This turning outwards or inwards suggests a contradiction. Addressing this Keller and Nesse's research (2006) propose the situation-symptom congruence hypothesis (SSC), that social loss is linked more with strengthening social bonds, whereas goal/status loss/failure is linked more with time for reflection and reassessment of the failure, leading to redirection. Barr-Zisowitz (2004) highlights the same contradiction proposing that it may also be culture-dependent. He cites the more individualistic North American culture where both behaviours of turning inwards and outwards would occur. He contrasts this with more collectivist cultures, for example, Ifaluk, Inuit and Buddhists, where a person who is sad would seek out company as they could expect support from others. This suggests that turning inwards or outwards is not an either/or but both behaviours have an adaptive function depending upon the individual, the context and the "feeling rules" (Hochschild, 2012) of the culture the person is part of.

2) Crying

A theme linked with sadness that can have interpersonal benefits is crying. It is a broad category that can encompass different levels of intensity including sobbing and weeping. It is believed to be universal and unique to humans and some primates (Ekman, 2003). In

relation to sadness, crying can be seen as a communication that "bids" or is a cry for help, support or compassion from another (Knox et al., 2017). Several writers take an attachment-theory view on the function of adult crying (Hendriks, Croon & Vingerhoets, 2008; Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2003; Nelson, 1998). At its simplest it is seen as a response to loss and separation when existing attachment bonds are threatened. There are different classifications including crying in protest, in despair, or inhibited crying (Nelson, 1998). Nelson (2005) asserts that protest crying can cause interpersonal difficulties as it can be viewed as manipulative with the potential to trigger resentment. She asserts that it is the cries of despair that moves others to help us and assists with the process of reorganizing ourselves and moving on. McNaughton (as cited in Barbalet, 2005) regards the function of tears as restoring equilibrium to the body following emotional arousal; a cathartic effect. Hendriks, Nelson, Cornelius and Vingerhoets (2008) argue that crying can enhance psychological and physiological well-being but acknowledge this may be linked to the social soothing it can elicit. Goleman (1995, p. 73) challenges the idea that having "a good cry" is beneficial, arguing that it can exacerbate rumination prolonging suffering. Cultural expectations can be an important influence on gender differences and how a person views crying in others and themselves. It would seem that crying is a complex behaviour provoking a mixture of responses. Findings from the data analysis suggest that crying can have benefits to health and well-being in a context where the reaction from another person is one of positive social support.

3) Expression and suppression of sadness

Another theme to emerge from the research was that of the expression and/or suppression of sadness. A function of our emotions is that they are an internal communication to ourselves regarding our needs. Outwardly expressing our emotions can alert others to our needs (Clark, Fitness & Brissette, 2004). Emotional expression can be viewed as social; therefore, understanding the interpersonal effects of expression and suppression in a social

context is important (Clark, 2002; Clark & Finkel, 2004). Several writers emphasize that we need to choose selectively the people who care enough about us to respond to the needs we have expressed; in this context expression can have benefits to our well-being and enhance intimacy (Clark et al., 2004; Fischer & Manstead, 2008; Graham, Huang, Clark & Helgeson, 2008). Hackenbracht and Tamir's research (2010) found that when people have positive expectations of others support for their expression of sadness, this had both interpersonal and intrapersonal benefits. On the other hand, there may be times when it is adaptive to suppress feelings depending on the context (Butler et al., 2003). Occasional use of suppression can be beneficial but chronic use can lead to inauthenticity in relationships, unresolved issues, a disconnection from self as well as unhealthy costs to physical health (Chevonsky & Hunt, 2017; Gross & Levenson, 1997; John & Gross, 2004). Some emotion regulation researchers argue that it is not about either expression or suppression of emotion but the ability to choose flexibly depending on the social context and disposition of the person (Bonnano, Papa, Lalande, Westphal & Coifman, 2004; Liverant, Brown, Barlow & Roemer, 2008). In summary, this would suggest that there are costs and benefits to both the expression and suppression of sadness. Rather than adhering exclusively to one behaviour or another, the research seems to emphasize the need for flexibility in an individuals' repertoire of emotion regulation depending on the context.

4) Music

Sadness associated with music emerged as a theme in the data analysis. Despite sadness largely being viewed as undesirable in our culture, there has been a long history since the time of the ancient Greeks of people being drawn to the entertainment and even the enjoyment of tragedy and sadness in the context of fiction and the arts (Eerola, Peltola & Vuoskoski, 2015; Eerola, Vuoskoski & Kautiainen, 2016; Menninghaus et al., 2017). One research study identified stimulating imagination, empathy, emotion regulation and no "real-life" implications as benefits of listening to sad music (Taruffi & Koelsch, 2014). This

presents something of a paradox as real emotions are triggered through the detached experience that can be pleasurable, cathartic and can lead to transformation (Eurola, Vuoskoski, Peltola, Putkinen & Schäfer, 2018). Similarly, Menninghaus et al. (2017) propose the Distancing-Embracing model which highlights the integration of the emotional experience whilst at the same time allowing for psychological distance. The research studies cited here all suggest beneficial emotional effects. Listening to sad music can provide emotional comfort, consolation and emotion regulation as well as an aesthetic experience (Taruffi & Koelsch, 2014). It can be used as a therapeutic resource to cope with loss (Eerola et al., 2015). Being moved by sad music can help restore homeostasis/balance (Eerola et al., 2018). The research of Eerola et al. (2016, p. 10) "suggests that music may have a rather direct route to our emotions".

> Music can pierce the heart directly; it needs no mediation. One does not have to know anything about Dido and Aeneas to be moved by her lament for him; anyone who has ever lost someone knows what Dido is expressing.
>
> (Sacks, 2007, as cited in Eerola et al., 2016, p. 10)

5) Gender

A prevalent stereotype that emerged from the data analysis process is that sadness is viewed as a 'feminine' emotion, contrasting with the view that anger is a 'male' emotion (Brody & Hall, 2000; Fischer, Rodriguez Mosquera, van Vianen & Manstead, 2004; Rivers et al., 2007). Shields (1987) considers that core features of femininity are emotionality and powerlessness. Cultural display rules may convey that it is acceptable for women to express sadness but not their anger; conversely, it is acceptable for men to express anger but not their sadness (Timmers et al., 1998). Their research found that men were reluctant to show sadness as it can imply vulnerability and powerlessness. This links with men showing more reluctance to cry (Becht & Vingerhoets, 2003; Bellieni, 2017), although this may be changing

over time (Hendriks, Croon et al., 2008; Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2003). The research of Fischer et al. (2004) highlights that women conforming to the gender role stereotype would identify more with powerless emotions such as sadness, as this maintains harmonious social relations. The research of Timmers et al. (1998) supports this, finding that men and women's motives were different when suppressing or expressing emotion. Women were found to be more concerned with relationships with others, whereas men were more concerned with losing power and status. They propose that these findings may be a result of gender role socialization processes. A potential consequence for men conforming to gender stereotypes is that suppressing sad feelings can contribute to interpersonal, physical and mental health problems (Pennebaker, 1989, cited in Brody, 1997). For women, over-experiencing sadness to the exclusion of anger can lead to feelings of powerlessness and helplessness; this has the potential to lead to depression in some circumstances (Fivush & Buckner, 2000). It appears from analysing the data that pressure to conform to cultural scripts and gender role stereotypes can influence how both men and women experience and express sadness. For men, loss of power and masculinity may be at stake; for women interconnectedness appears to be more of a priority. Both taken to extremes can have health and well-being implications. Like anger, features of Western gender role stereotypes can be in contradiction with sadness being viewed as a potential healthy emotion. There are many positive benefits to men experiencing and expressing their sadness. These can include: receiving social support; feeling authentic; experiencing relief/catharsis; enhancing intimacy and friendship. Sadness has the potential to offer intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits when fully experienced and expressed.

6) Cognitive, motivation and social behaviour

Recent research has shown that affect may influence how people think, both in terms of process and content, and how this affects cognition and behaviour (Forgas, 2014). Much of the research that was carried out focused on sadness as a mild mood, which is defined by

Oatley and Johnson-Laird (2014) as lasting for hours or days. The research proposes that sadness can have beneficial effects on 1) cognition, 2) motivation and 3) social behaviour (Forgas, 2014). 1) Cognitively, sadness was found to alter information processing to a more deliberate analytical reasoning style (Forgas, 2014; Lench et al., 2016), resulting in better memory (Forgas, 2017b; Storbeck & Clore, 2005) and more accurate social judgements (Bodenhausen, Sheppard & Kramer, 1994; Forgas, 2013; Park & Banaji, 2000). In contrast, Ambady and Gray's research (2002) found that sadness reduced the ability to judge accurately. The function of this more effortful and analytical processing style is viewed as an attentive and vigilant response to new external information in a changing and challenging environment (Forgas, 2009). 2) Increased motivation and perseverance were identified as a benefit (Forgas, 2014). Raghunathan and Pham's research (1999) proposes that the function of this is linked to the goal of replacing or substituting that which has been lost. 3) The research also identified benefits in social behaviour. Koch, Forgas and Matovic's research (2013) found that this linked to the factual and analytical style outlined above. People in a sad mood were more likely to be polite, conforming to Grice's communication norms, 1975, of "quantity, relevance, quality and manner" (p. 326). They were also more effective at persuasive arguments and communication (Forgas, 2007). Other experiments indicated a sense of fairness and awareness of the needs of others (Tan & Forgas, 2010). Overall the research suggests that sadness can elicit a "more externally oriented, accommodative processing and thus greater concern with social norms" (Tan & Forgas, 2010, p. 571). This research offers evidence that sadness can have beneficial effects on cognition, motivation and social behaviour that is functional in appropriate circumstances.

7) Mixed emotions

A theme arising from the data is whether sadness is the bipolar opposite of happiness as is commonly believed. Studies have shown that mixed feelings can co-occur and are "organized in a bivariate space rather than a bipolar continuum" (Larsen, McGraw &

Cacioppo, 2001, p. 695). Rafaeli and Revelle's research (2006) disputes the bipolar view asserting that this can lead to confusion as to how affect can be understood. It can feel very uncomfortable to experience two conflicting emotions. The ability to accept, process and synthesize contradictions/duality can enhance health and well-being (Adler & Hershfield, 2012; Larsen, Hemenover, Norris & Cacioppo, 2003; Larsen et al., 2001). However, there may be times when the discomfort of the contradictions is not experienced if one of the emotions is outside conscious awareness (Williams & Aaker, 2002).

8) Loss of sadness

A recurring theme in the literature is that the value of sadness does not appear to be fully recognized currently in our culture. Work in counselling and psychotherapy can often be focused on the realization, processing and integration of hitherto unrecognized feelings of sadness. There has been concern in recent years that psychiatry has medicalized normal sorrows leading to the 'loss of sadness' (Horwitz & Wakefield, 2007; Ivtzan, Lomas, Hefferon & Worth, 2016; Williams, 2009). "Sadness is an inherent part of the human condition not a mental disorder" (Horwitz & Wakefield, 2007 p. 225). Forgas (2017a, p. 19) warns that "we need to develop a social and cultural acceptance of sadness … as a valid and useful reaction to the human condition". Sadness itself is not the problem, it is the solution (Nesse,1999).

Summary

It has not been possible within the limits of the dissertation to explore issues such as the close links between anger and sadness; cultural differences and social expectations.

Key points

- Sadness can be defined as a response to the irrevocable loss of a relationship, goal, object or a part of the self.

- Sadness may have overlapping characteristics but are different from grief and depression.
- Sadness can motivate people to strengthen and sustain relationships by prompting the value of social bonds. This may be linked with a collectivist culture.
- In contrast, sadness can trigger inactivity and withdrawal. It depends on the individual, the context and the culture.
- Expressing sadness and/or crying can be beneficial to health and well-being if received empathically.
- Chronic use of suppression can be physically unhealthy and lead to inauthenticity, unresolved issues and a disconnection from self.
- A prevalent stereotype is that sadness is viewed as a feminine emotion. This links with vulnerability and powerlessness.
- Pressure to conform to cultural scripts and gender role stereotypes can influence how both men and women experience and express sadness.

This chapter has shown that there is support for the integration of sadness contributing to health and well-being, particularly regarding personal authenticity and interpersonal relationships.

> Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. It is far better to take things as they come along with patience and equanimity. Carl Jung (1960).

The next chapter discusses the findings of the research. Implications are discussed.

Chapter 6

Discussion

This chapter discusses:

- Introduction
- **Main Themes** from the data analysis
    1) Definitions
    2) Biological, cultural, historical and linguistic influences
    3) Relationships
        - Close relationships
        - Workplace relationships
    4) Expression of anger and sadness
        - Anger
        - Sadness
    5) Suppression of anger and sadness
    6) Gender
- Summary - Key points
- Implications - Emotional intelligence; emotion regulation; therapy and the counselling world.

Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the established and contemporary literature to ascertain what potential support there is for the integration of all emotions for well-being, especially those that can have negative connotations. Within the limits of the dissertation, I have chosen to focus on two of the basic emotions commonly viewed as negative: anger and sadness. I have selected anger and sadness as they can represent different and contrasting functions. Anger can be viewed as an active, energized, approach emotion, whereas

sadness can be viewed as a passive, de-energized, avoidant/withdrawal emotion (Lewis, 2001; Rivers et al., 2007).

Main themes from the data analysis

1) Definitions

An unanticipated theme arose only when I started to compare the findings between anger and sadness. In attempting to define what both the emotions of anger and sadness are and are not, some of the literature highlighted potential misunderstandings of what they each constitute. Anger was sometimes viewed as including aggression, whereas research on anger and aggression proposes that it only arises in 10% of encounters, and therefore is not inextricably linked (Averill, 1983). Similarly, whilst sadness has overlapping characteristics with both grief and depression (Leventhal, 2008), it is viewed as a separate functional response to loss, not to be pathologized (Horwitz & Wakefield, 2007). It is possible that these common misunderstandings may be contributing to the negative connotations that both the emotions of anger and sadness can have. This is my experience as a therapist at times. It is not uncommon for clients to be unaware, disowning or avoidant of their feelings of anger and/or sadness. This study hopes to contribute to addressing these potential misunderstandings or confusions by highlighting some of the benefits of anger and sadness to our well-being. The potential implications and recommendations for therapy, education and the wider community are addressed at the end of this chapter.

2) Biological, cultural, historical and linguistic influences

Another theme that emerged at the comparison stage, was the influence that other areas can bring to how both anger and sadness may be viewed and understood, for example: biology, culture, linguistics, history. Some emotion theorists assert that emotions such as anger and sadness are basic, universal, hardwired and have unique facial expressions amongst other features (Ekman, 1992; Griffiths, 2003). Others argue against the notion of

any emotion being basic (Ortony & Turner, 1990; Solomon, 2002a) and view them more as 'fuzzy categories' or prototypes (Fehr & Russell, 1984; Tracy et al., 2007). Sociologists acknowledge that the basic emotions are hardwired but social constructivists argue that the expression of them is socially constructed (Averill, 1983; Stets & Turner, 2008). Shweder (1994) and Wierzbicka (1986) challenge whether emotions can be known as universal when the cross-cultural research was based upon using terminology from Western culture. Not only can anger and sadness be viewed differently in terms of classification and cross-culturally, but also throughout the history of Western culture. Throughout different periods of history there have been varying shifts in how anger and sadness are accepted or rejected, valued or despised (Barr-Zisowitz, 2004; Forgas, 2014; Potegal & Novaco, 2010). This appears to continue in contemporary culture, for example: American culture seems to evaluate anger negatively whereas Zulu culture values it positively (Kövecses, 2000); sadness is missing from the vocabulary of Tahitians; is valued highly in Iranian culture (Kleinman & Good, 1985, cited in Barr-Zisowitz, 2004); and merges with anger in other cultures such as the Luganda and Illingot people (Ellis & Tucker, 2015).

These are all brief examples from different disciplines of the varied and sometimes conflicting views that can contribute to how emotion, and in particular anger and sadness, can be viewed. What has emerged in the research is that any emotion such as anger or sadness is a very complex phenomenon. It seems that there is a lot more to it than just feeling sad/angry for a single moment. It involves complex processes that include amongst others the cognitive, the physiological, the social and cultural (Parrott, 2004). It is relational and multi-factorial (Ellis & Tucker, 2015). Contributors to the field can include such disciplines as biology, psychology, clinical psychology and psychiatry, social psychology, philosophy, cognitive science and neuroscience. There is a tension here for me in making meaning from the vast quantity, diversity and contradictions within the literature. There are also challenges in conveying the different knowledges and understandings that so many

researchers and theorists have contributed to the study of emotions, without reducing their meaning. This struggle is what McLeod (2011, p. 146) calls the “crisis of representation”. In this section I have tried to catch the flavour of the many diverse influences and complexities that can all contribute to how emotions are viewed. It is also illuminating to have a ‘back story’ on what may have contributed to some emotions being viewed as positive and some as negative, depending on the context. The data that has been collected and presented here is valuable in deepening our understanding of the phenomena being discussed.

3) Relationships

The most significant and overarching theme to arise from the data was about relationships. Relationships are fundamental to human experience and include relationships with the self, others and the environment. Emotions are central to what it is to be human and they occur in the many relationships that impact on our lives, for example: families, friends, the workplace and intimate relationships (Ekman, 2003). Emotions are communications, both internally to ourselves and externally to others (Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 2008; Tooby & Cosmides, 2008). In this study the research has shown that anger occurs mostly as a ‘social event’ (Tavris, 1989), and the assertive expression of anger can benefit relationships in that it offers feedback (Butler et al, 2017).

- Close relationships.

Bowlby (1973) proposes that anger is about protest and that the function of healthy anger is to promote and re-establish the attachment bond, not to disrupt it. Studies found that anger used constructively can bring about reaffirmation, reconciliation and improved relationships especially in relationships that are close (Averill, 1983; Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Kuppens et al, 2004). This links with the research findings for sadness where a recurring theme was

the interpersonal benefits of sadness. Leary (2015) found that sadness motivates people to strengthen and sustain interpersonal relationships. It can act as a prompt to value friends and family, and to maintain social bonds (Gray et al., 2011; Nesse, 1990). A different perspective could view anger as unhelpful in relationships when anger is too intense, too frequent, long-lasting and unresolved (Kassinove & Tafrate, 2002). Similarly, another perspective could view sadness as triggering a person to be inactive and withdrawn socially (Gray et al., 2011; Nesse, 1990). Factors that will influence behavioural responses can depend, amongst others, on the individual, the relationship, the context, the "feeling rules" (Hothschild, 2012) and the specific culture (Barr-Zisowitz, 2004). Overall, the results of this study indicate support for emotions such as anger and sadness as having a constructive contribution to make in maintaining healthy, close interpersonal relationships.

- Workplace relationships.

According to the World Health Organization (1994), 58% of the world's population "spends one-third of their adult life at work" (p. 1). Research has found that, alongside fear, anger and sadness are cited as the most frequent negative emotions experienced and encountered in the workplace (Basch & Fisher, 2000; Grandey, Tam & Brauburger, 2002; Pearson, 2017). Fitness' research (2000) found that power relationships between interactants were the most important factors in experiencing and expressing anger in the workplace. Tiediens' study (2001) proposes that role and status can influence whether anger can be used functionally or not. Schwarzmüller, Brosi, Spörrle and Welpe's research (2017), in addition to acknowledging the prevalent idea that leaders who display anger have more power, albeit at times coercively, also found that leaders who display sadness have more referent personal power. The deliberate analytical reasoning style identified as a feature of sadness by Forgas' research (2014) was found to be effective in leaders who display sadness when the task required an analytical approach. Unlike anger, little research appears to be available focusing on sadness in the workplace (Pearson, 2017; Strongman,

2003), other than the influence on leadership. Pearson's research (2017) found that a sizeable proportion of management viewed emotions in the workplace as inappropriate and unprofessional. However, the research also showed that concealing or discounting emotions such as anger and sadness can be very costly to productivity because of employee disengagement.

These findings also suggest that issues of power and status can constrain employees' expressions of emotions such as anger and sadness. By definition there is a power imbalance between employee and employer (Strongman, 2003) which appears to influence the dynamics. It is interesting to note that there is more available research on the effects of anger than sadness in the workplace. A potential explanation, from reading the literature, is that anger has appeared to receive more of a research focus, possibly because it can be an active, approach emotion, whereas sadness can be a passive, withdrawal emotion. It could be that within the 'feeling rules' of society it is easier to conceal feelings of sadness more than anger in the workplace. The implications of possibly having to hide emotions can create an internal incongruence or 'false self' for the individual. This has potential implications for the health and well-being of each individual in the workforce and ultimately the health of the organization itself. Stickney and Geddes' research (2014) found that employees who expressed anger contributed to an improvement in problem-solving and were shown to have commitment to their role, colleagues and organization. Geddes and Callister (2007, p. 740) propose that it requires "effective management, training and development" and a fostering of trust, understanding and mutual respect within the culture of the workplace. This links with emotional intelligence which will be discussed later in this chapter. Also linked with emotional intelligence and relevant to all relationships is when it is appropriate to express or suppress emotions. It is to this area I will now focus the discussion.

4) Expression of anger and sadness

The expression and/or suppression of emotions, particularly focusing on anger and sadness, was another significant theme.

- Anger.

A substantial set of research papers collected were particularly pertaining to the expression and suppression of anger. A common discussion in the data referred to the different and dichotomous behavioural responses of 'anger-in' and 'anger-out' (Kuppens et al., 2004; Linden et al., 2003; Mikulincer, 1998). Both responses were linked with poor health issues (Suinn, 2001; Suls, 2013; Tafrate et al., 2002) but were largely focused on destructive anger. Venting was also found to be counterproductive as it maintained the anger experience and potentially acted as a 'rehearsal' for aggressive behaviour (Bushman, 2002; Bushman et al., 1999). What emerges from the data is that the intentions of the angered person will influence their behaviour (Tangney et al., 1996). Depending on whether the motivations are 'malevolent, fractious or constructive' will influence whether the pathway of anger is functional or dysfunctional (Averill, 1982). Several researchers propose more comprehensive models that also include behaviours such as avoidance, indirect anger and assertion, better reflecting what is a complex emotion (Linden et al., 2003; O'Connor et al., 2001). There was considerable support in the literature for problem-solving assertive/constructive anger. Researchers found this style and behaviour to be beneficial for interpersonal relationships and health (Feshbach, 1986; Gross & Levenson, 1997; Lench et al., 2016; Mikulincer, 1998). These are key findings for this research study, as they offer a perspective that anger expressed assertively/constructively has a contribution to make in the integration of emotions for well-being.

- Sadness.

Similarly, there was support in the literature for the expression of sadness, although less studies were available from the data collected. Hackenbracht and Tamir's research (2010) found that when people had positive expectations of support from others for their expression of sadness, it resulted in both intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits. Expressing emotions can alert others to our needs (Clark et al., 2004); this links with Nelson's study (2005) which found that the communication of crying in despair moved others to help. Several authors emphasize the need to choose people who will respond to our needs; in this context expression can have benefits to our well-being and enhance intimacy (Clark et al., 2004; Fischer & Manstead, 2008; Graham et al., 2008).

The data analysis from across the study seems to indicate that the expression of emotions, if done assertively and with respect for the other/s, is beneficial to ourselves and our relationships. The implications for therapy and the wider community will be discussed later in the chapter.

5) Suppression of anger and sadness

Doyle and Biaggio's research (1981) found that despite participants suppressing their feelings of anger it resulted in 'leaking out', with the potential consequences that it might impact negatively on interpersonal communications. Unexpressed anger has the potential to develop into contempt in non-intimate relationships (Fischer & Roseman, 2007). There was some support for the suppression of sadness being beneficial depending upon the context. However, chronic use of suppression of emotions generally was found to be damaging to physical and mental health, and social well-being (Chevonsky & Hunt, 2017). This links with being inauthentic in relationships, disconnected from self and issues left unresolved (Chevonsky & Hunt, 2017; Gross & Levenson, 1997; John & Gross, 2004). This can contribute to the "emotional miscommunication evident in so many forms of psychopathology" (Gross & Levenson, 1997, p. 102).

The findings across the study seem to indicate that the chronic use of suppression can have detrimental effects on the self and relationships. However, used judiciously it can at times be a beneficial option depending on the context. Clark and Finkel (2005) argue that any debate about expression versus suppression is overly simplistic. It is about the ability to choose flexibly depending on the context, the relationships and the disposition of the person (Bonnano et al., 2008). This links with emotion regulation and emotional intelligence. "The objective is not to suppress or merely express … [emotions], but to understand and integrate them into our lives" (van Deurzen, 2005, p. 110).

6) Gender

The data collected for researching gender and anger was far more substantial than that available for gender and sadness. This was echoed in other themes across the study, suggesting that sadness may be under-researched. There appears to be fewer gender differences in emotional experience, but significant gender differences in the emotional expression of both anger and sadness (Rivers et al., 2007; Timmers et al., 1998). Whilst acknowledging the influence of biological sex differences, a significant body of researchers assert that emotions are social constructions (Averill, 1983; Brody, 1997) and therefore gender differences are influenced by socialization processes. Western gender role stereotypical descriptions of men can include strong, independent and rational; female stereotypical descriptions can include nurturing, emotional and relational (Koppers & Epperson, 1996; Smith et al., 1989). Fischer (1993, p. 315) argues that the difference between men and women are not so significant that they "they justify the persistent stereotype of the emotional woman and the non-emotional man". It would appear that these gender role stereotypes result in emotions being categorized as typical female and male (Schirmer, 2015), even though they are largely universal. To limit the emotional repertoire of both men and women has implications for their health and well-being as all emotions have a function. Dysfunction has the potential to arise as a consequence.

A common stereotypical classification that can prevail is that sadness is a “feminine”, powerless emotion and anger is a “masculine”, powerful emotion (Brody & Hall, 2000; Ellis & Tucker, 2015; Fischer et al., 2004). This links with power, a sub-theme that emerged as an important factor in the research on gender and emotion. Anger is viewed as a powerful emotion as it has agency and energy (Shields, 1987). People who express anger can be seen as competent, dominant and powerful (Tiedens, 2001). The research of Timmers et al. (1998) found that men were concerned with power and status, whereas women’s priorities were more concerned with relationships with others. They propose that cultural display rules may convey that it is acceptable for men to express anger but not sadness; conversely, they may convey that it is acceptable for women to express sadness but not anger. For women, the effects of suppressing anger can lead to a feeling of powerlessness. Wood and Eagly, writing in 2002, maintain that although Western societies’ social structures are currently more egalitarian, patriarchal social structures can still be influential. This has the potential to perpetuate status and power imbalances between women and men (Brody & Hall, 2000). The theme of power that emerged from the data was an unexpected finding; it seems to have more of a bearing on gender and emotion than at first appeared. Crawford et al. (1992) writing from a feminist perspective, challenge us to bring about social change in the way that emotions are viewed, and for women not to collude in the power imbalance.

These gender role differences can also be viewed from cultural perspectives such as interdependence versus individualism, and/or personal motivation involving intimacy versus control. Deaux and Major (1987), whilst acknowledging the influence of gender role socialization processes and stereotypes, argue that the personal beliefs of the individual/s also need to be considered. Several researchers emphasize that how people experience and express emotion will be context related (Fischer & Evers, 2011; Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Kring, 2000). Deux and Major (1987, p. 370) assert that “gender-related behaviour … [is] highly flexible”. Gender differences in emotion are influenced by many factors

(Shields, 1987; Gong, Wong & Wang, 2018). They are complex and can include social, cultural, biological, cognitive and personality factors (Brody & Hall, 2008). The findings from this study have highlighted gender, and gender roles in particular, as an influential factor relating to the experience and expression of emotions such as anger and sadness. The feminizing of sadness and the masculinizing of anger appears to have skewed how they are evaluated. Strong links with power/powerlessness also may contribute to their negative reputation. This study has shown that there is support for the integration of emotions such as anger and sadness. If these emotions have become gendered, this potentially disadvantages both genders in limiting the full spectrum of emotions available to them, and therefore the loss of the functions these emotions can serve.

Summary

Key Points

- The focus of the study has been two emotions commonly viewed as negative : anger and sadness.
- Thematic analysis has proved to be a valuable and effective qualitative research method. Using an inductive approach and continual refinement of the data, the themes and patterns emerged; some anticipated and some unexpected.
- Common misunderstandings and confusion of what both anger and sadness each constitute emerged from the data and may be contributing to their negative reputation.
- There are many diverse influences that can all contribute to how emotions are viewed, for example: biological, historical, social, cultural.

- The results of the study indicate support for emotions that can have negative connotations such as anger and sadness as having a constructive contribution to make in maintaining healthy, close interpersonal relationships.
- The findings suggest that issues of status and power in the workplace can constrain employees' expressions of emotions such as anger and sadness.
- Expressing emotions, if done assertively, can be beneficial to ourselves and our relationships whereas chronic use of suppression can have detrimental effects to both. The ability to choose flexibly was found to be the most beneficial depending on the context, the relationship and the individual.
- Issues regarding gender role stereotypes were highlighted as an influential factor suggesting that the masculinizing of anger and the feminizing of sadness appears to have skewed how they are evaluated.
- Strong links with power/powerlessness emerged in the findings. This may also contribute to their negative reputation.

Implications and Recommendations

This next section discusses how a healthy approach to emotions can be fostered through the development of emotional intelligence, emotion regulation and therapy.

Emotional intelligence

To harness emotions effectively they need to be integrated and employed skilfully to maximize their benefits. Emotions are vital signals for problem-solving, communication and survival (Greenberg, 2015). How a person uses these signals depends on "how skilled they are at perceiving, understanding and utilizing this emotional information, and that a person's

level of “emotional intelligence” contributes substantially to his or her intellectual and emotional well-being and growth” (Salovey, Detweiler-Bedell, B.T., Detweiler-Bedell, J.D. & Mayer, 2008, p. 533). Mayer and Salovey (1997) propose a model of emotional intelligence consisting of four sets of competencies and related subskills. The four competencies include the following: “perception, appraisal and expression of emotion; emotional facilitation of thinking; understanding and analysing emotional information; regulation of emotion” (Salovey et al., 2008, p. 535, Figure 33.1). The establishment of emotional intelligence with its suggested competencies has resulted in training programmes in both education and organizations. Research on the brain has shown that a person’s emotional intelligence can be developed (Coleman & Argue, 2017). Actively developing emotional intelligence through education and training can foster understanding of the value of all emotions and help develop tools to manage them effectively. Emotional intelligence has been found to potentially improve health and well-being (Martins, Ramalho & Morin, 2010; Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2012). It can also foster success in personal and work relationships (Salovey & Grewal, 2005).

Emotion regulation

Emotion regulation, one of the four competencies outlined above, particularly featured in the data corpus. Emotion regulation has been defined as “the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions” (Gross, 1998, p. 275). Gross (1998) classifies strategies into attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation. Attentional deployment can include distraction, rumination and concentration, for example: affective labelling, expressive writing. Cognitive change can include reappraisal, restructuring and reframing, for example: talking to others, mindfulness training. Response modulation can involve behavioural, physiological or experiential responses, for example: self-soothing, exercise and relaxation (Feldman Barrett, Gross, Conner Christensen, & Benvenuto, 2001; Gross,

1998; Schirmer, 2015). Webb, Miles and Sheeran's meta-analysis (2012) of the process model of emotion regulation found that reappraisal, active distraction and perspective taking were found to be the most beneficial ways to process feelings. Greenberg and Vandekerckhove (2008), writing from a psychotherapeutic perspective, emphasize the importance of the therapeutic relationship helping foster internalized affect regulation through the attuned, soothing, congruent and accepting stance of the therapist. Koole and Aldao (2016) highlight the plasticity of emotion regulation skills and how people's competencies at emotion regulation can be enhanced through training. Given the key role that emotion regulation plays in everyday functioning, this would suggest that promoting opportunities to examine personal strategies of emotion regulation through self-exploration, training and therapy, would enhance the integration of all emotions for health and well-being.

Therapy and the counselling world

This study has found support for the integration of emotions that can have negative connotations such as anger and sadness. The emotions that most clients work on in therapy are anger, sadness, shame and fear (Greenberg, 2015). The literature collected for the study has shown that how a person views such emotions is influenced by factors that can be historical, cultural, social, familial and gendered. Both the client and the therapist will bring their own influences and views on different emotions to the therapy. Therefore, understanding the client's current perspective on different emotions can inform the therapy and also highlights the significance of the therapist's own emotional awareness in the process. "Emotion and emotional processing are now widely perceived to be vital dimensions of therapy in all therapeutic modalities" (Whelton, 2004, p. 67). Coombs, Coleman and Jones' research (2002) found that therapists who offered a collaborative approach to the exploration of emotions resulted in positive outcomes, regardless of therapy orientation.

Interventions will depend upon the “client’s presenting state and proximal zone of emotional development at any given time” (Pascual-Leone & Greenberg, 2007, p. 886). Interventions will differ according to whether it is growthful to acknowledge, express or contain, accept and integrate, and/or to explore and transform emotions that are dysfunctional (Greenberg, 2008a). Greenberg (2008b), writing from an experiential therapy perspective, asserts that emotional processing is at the heart of effective therapy. He proposes five principals to facilitate emotion change: awareness, expression, regulation, reflection and transformation. Whelton (2004) reminds us that both emotion and cognition contribute to transformation. Macaskie (2017, p. 174) warns that therapies which focus predominantly on either emotional experience or intellectual insight without integrating the two may leave unresolved issues. Engaging with and processing emotions are essential parts of effective therapy but facilitating personal change also needs “cognitive reflection and the construction of new meaning” (Whelton, 2004, p. 67). Skilfully working with clients’ emotional processes within the context of a secure and empathic therapeutic relationship will assist clients in integrating all their emotions for the benefit of their health and well-being (Greenberg, 2008b; Pos & Greenberg, 2006).

“It is only when therapy enlists deep emotions that it becomes a powerful force for change” (Yalom, 1989, p. 35).

The next chapter revisits the aims of the study, summarizes the key findings and outlines the conclusions reached from the research. Recommendations for further research are suggested. The study concludes with my reflexive account of the dissertation journey.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This chapter discusses:

- Introduction – Aims of the study
- Summary of key findings and conclusions
- Implications
- Contribution to knowledge
- Recommendations for further research
- Reflexive account

Introduction

The overall aim of this research is to advance an understanding of the value of emotions that can have negative connotations in today's world. The specific research objectives are:

- To explore the value of emotions
- To identify the emotions that can have negative connotations currently
- To examine the impact of excluding these emotions
- To consider the value of integrating all emotions for well-being

Summary of key findings and conclusions

The choice of a literature-based study has provided me with a rich opportunity to critically review the theory and research from a wide knowledge base, incorporating accumulated knowledge and understanding over time. Through the inductive process of the qualitative research method of thematic analysis, a range of themes pertinent to the study have emerged. Through a staged process of analysis, meaning-making and applying my interpretations as the researcher, the process has yielded a number of findings relevant to the research aim and objectives. The key findings from the study are as follows:

- Emotions involve complex processes that include responses such as physiology, experience, behaviour and communication.
- Emotions can be viewed as functional; they are solutions to specific problems.
- The valence element of appraisal is evaluative and is commonly linked with a positive or negative judgement about individual emotions.
- The idea of a positive/negative bipolar framework is challenged, distorting what are complex and coalesced phenomena.
- The commonly viewed negative emotions of anger and sadness were chosen as a focus as they can represent different and contrasting functions.
- Common misunderstandings and confusion of what both anger and sadness each constitute emerged from the data and may be contributing to their negative reputation.
- There are many diverse influences that can all contribute to how emotions are viewed, for example: biological, historical, social, cultural.
- Emotions such as anger and sadness are broadly universal but how an individual person experiences and expresses different emotions will be unique.
- Issues regarding gender role stereotypes were highlighted as an influential factor, suggesting that the masculinizing of anger and the feminizing of sadness appears to have skewed how they are evaluated.
- Strong links with power/powerlessness emerged in the findings. This may also contribute to their negative reputation.
- Expressing emotions, if done assertively, can be beneficial to ourselves and our relationships, whereas chronic use of suppression can have detrimental effects to

both. The ability to choose flexibly was found to be the most beneficial depending on the context, the relationship and the individual.

- The findings suggest that issues of power and status in the workplace can constrain employees' expressions of emotions such as anger and sadness.
- The results of the study indicate support for emotions that can have negative connotations such as anger and sadness as having a constructive contribution to make in maintaining healthy, close interpersonal relationships.

Throughout the themes of the study the data collected often yielded contradictory findings. These have been compared and contrasted for consideration. This has been an illuminating process as it emphasizes the many different viewpoints that can exist given the complex phenomena being studied and the influences that can come to bear on them. "Contradictions, ambivalence and tension reside in all critical inquiries" (Plummer, 2011, p. 205).

The research question posed was 'what potential support is there for the integration of all emotions for well-being, including those that can have negative connotations?' The research has addressed the question, confirming support for the integration of emotions that can have negative connotations such as anger and sadness. This matches my expectations and personal/professional viewpoint. Depending on the context, the relationship and the individual, they have a potential constructive part to play in contributing to our health and well-being when used intelligently.

Implications

The findings suggest that there are implications for the promotion of emotional intelligence, the understanding of emotion regulation, and application within therapy. For a full discussion on the implications and recommendations please see the last section in the discussion chapter (Chapter 6).

Contribution to knowledge

I chose to study emotions that can have negative connotations as I assessed it to be a neglected dimension. The data collected for the literature-based study has drawn from a broad range of disciplines and viewpoints over time. Exploring the wealth of research has allowed me 'to stand on the shoulders of giants'. In seeking to capture some of the essence of their research and findings, I have endeavoured to shed further light on the value of all emotions, including those that can have negative connotations.

Recommendations for further research

It has not been possible within the limits of the dissertation to study all the emotions that can be labelled as negative. Further research could focus on these, for example: fear, shame, disgust, contempt.

This study has focused on adults. A potential field study could be to explore young people's developmental processes relating to emotions that can have negative connotations.

A study exploring the function of the full range of different emotions in social relationships would be a valuable focus.

A contemporary field study of gender role stereotypes with a focus on emotions that can have negative connotations would add to our understanding of this influential dimension.

Reflexive Account

"Reflexivity: the idea that the researcher is her or his primary instrument, and as a result must be aware of the fantasies, expectations and needs that his or her participation introduces to the research process" (McLeod, 2003, p. 72).

I began the research journey looking for the value that emotions that can have negative connotations can bring to well-being. This arose as a result of my growing scepticism with positive psychology seemingly influencing an already prevalent false 'Pollyanna' attitude in

some Western societies. This is a personal response and also viewed through my lens as a therapist. My motivation was to ascertain whether there was evidence demonstrating that all emotions matter to our well-being.

At the data collection stage, aware of the importance of critical thinking and trustworthiness, I challenged myself not to just select research papers agreeing with my hypothesis. At the data analysis stage, I noted in my Reflexive Diary that I was entertaining ideas that seem to contradict my original 'mission', and that this felt expansive. As I reach the end of my research journey, I am aware of how much the process has changed me. I am surprised at how easily I have adapted to becoming more of a critical thinker. There is no doubt that the experience of being a researcher has changed me, both as a person and as a professional. I notice that I am less partisan and generally more critical in my thinking and judgement than hitherto.

The choice of a literature-based study and thematic analysis has proved to be a challenging and worthy approach for my research topic. The journey has been exhausting and enriching in equal measures. There have been ups and downs, but my passion to understand more about these fascinating and vital phenomena has been the fuel to sustain me throughout; this along with all the encouragement I have received from everyone in my life.

This being human is a guest house.

Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,

some momentary awareness comes

as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!

Even if they’re a crowd of sorrows,

who violently sweep your house

empty of its furniture,

still, treat each guest honorably.

He may be clearing you out

for some new delight…

Be grateful for whoever comes,

because each has been sent

as a guide from beyond.

(Rumi, cited in Ivtzan et al., 2016)

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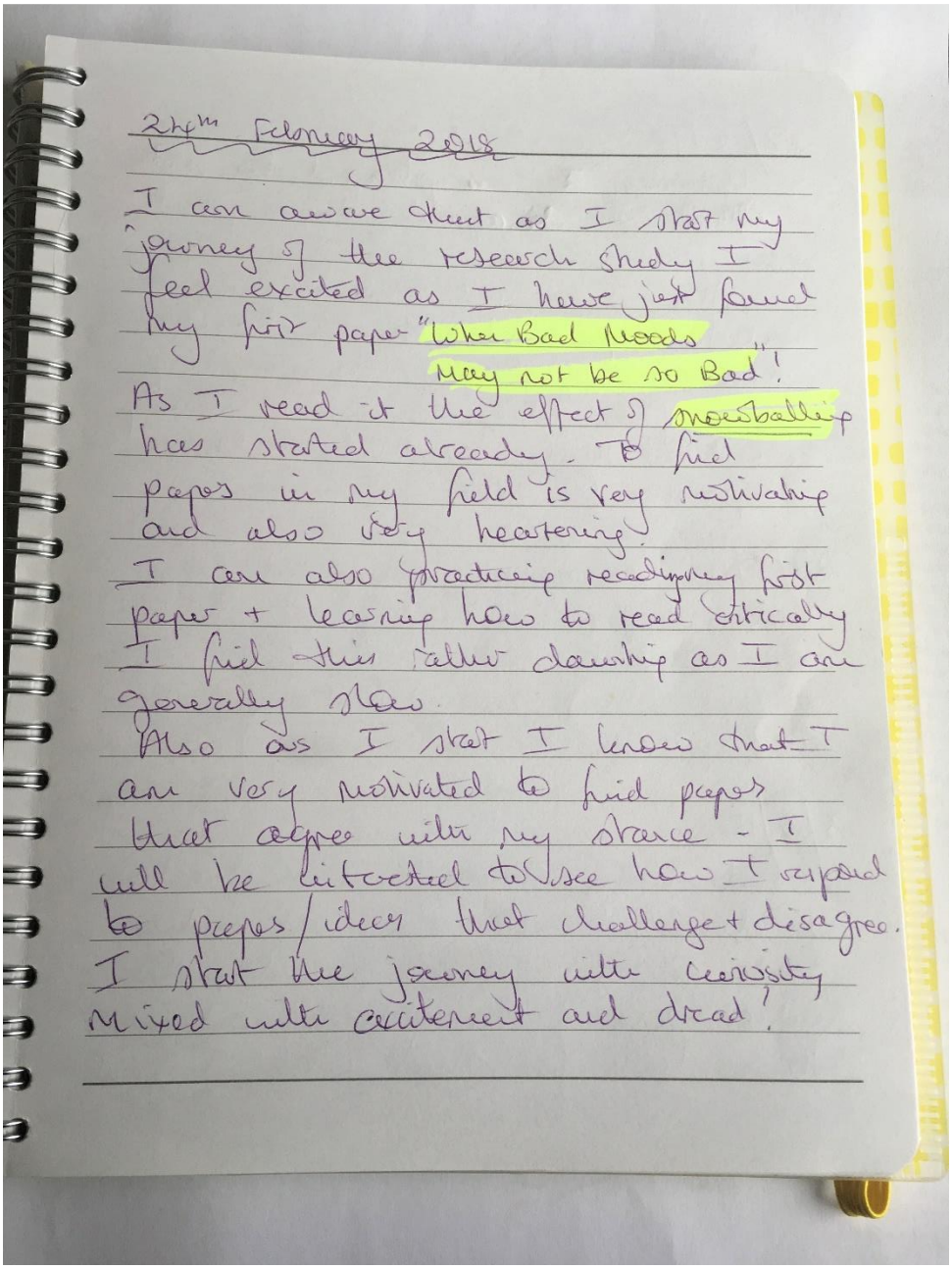
Appendix A

Example of a reflexive diary extract



Appendix B

Data Collection Account

The databases selected were recommended by the librarians as the best for counselling studies. They were as follows: SocINDEX, IBSS, CINAHL, Web of Science, Wiley Online, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, CPJ, EThOS, ChesterRep and the University Advanced Library Search.

Key words for the searches were taken from the research title and question. Alternative terms were also used, for example: 1) well-being, wellbeing, well being, wellness, health, positive benefits, life satisfaction, life quality. 2) positive, constructive, function* benefits, valuing. 3) anger or sad* depending on the chapter focus.

Boolean Operators used were as follows: 'AND' narrows the search; 'OR' widens the search; brackets ( ) group words together with OR, AND; 'NOT' excludes specific words; asterisks* allows variant endings.

Limits were applied to each search. Included were: peer reviews; full text; English language. Excluded were: newspaper articles; book reviews; grey literature .

When full text articles were not accessible through the database searches, they were often located on Sematic Scholar, Google Scholar and Google.

The first search used the University Advance Library Database. Using search terms such as anger/sadness AND positive benefits AND (health OR well-being). The results were 89,984 and 40,456 respectively. After applying Boolean operators, the numbers were still too large to work with therefore searches were switched to other databases to narrow the results.

If a search yielded unmanageable results, I would research the first 300 articles.

If the search terminology used did not get results the database's Thesaurus was used.

The Boolean operator NOT was used to exclude unwanted areas, for example, depression.

Using the databases and applying different search terms did not yield enough articles to conduct a full research. In order to expand the collection, the 'snowballing' strategy was applied. This is drawing on the reference list of pertinent papers already collected. This proved to be a very productive strategy, expanding the collection considerably.

The snowball sources for Anger were as follows: Hess, 2014; Kuppens, Van Mechelen and Meulders, 2004; Lench, Tibbett and Bench, 2016; Fischer and Evers, 2011.

The snowball sources for Sadness were as follows: Forgas, 2014; Forgas, 2017b; Gray, Ishii and Ambady, 2011; Dejonckheere, Bastian, Fried, Murphy and Kuppens, 2017; Henretty, Levitt and Mathews, 2008.

After researching a comprehensive number of databases, I reached a level of saturation when the same articles kept appearing in each database. At this point I concluded my data collection and began the analysis.

Appendix C

Database Searches- **Anger**

Limits applied to each search - Included: peer reviewed, full text available, English language.

Excluded: newspaper articles; book reviews.

Boolean Operators used: the columns **AND** narrow the search; OR widens the search; brackets ( ) group words together with OR, AND; NOT excludes specific words; asterisks* allows variant endings.

Database		AND		AND		Results	Usable Research
Unilibrary Search	anger		positive benefits		(health OR well-being)	89,984	Too many to search
	anger		functional		(health OR well-being)	60, 718	As above
	anger		functional		(health OR well-being OR wellbeing)	4,671	As above
	valuing		anger			12,092	As above
SocIndex	anger		positive			326	7
	anger		functional			24	5
	anger		functional		(well-being OR wellbeing OR health)	6	0
IBSS	anger		function			0	
CINAHL	anger		function			98	2
	anger		positive function			5	1
	anger		functional		positive	9	2
	positive anger		functional		healthy	5	0
	anger		function*		(benefits OR advantages OR positive effects)	58	2
Web of Science	anger		constructive			204	3
	anger		function		positive	481	4
EThOS	anger		constructive		positive	23	2
Wiley Online	positive anger					7	1
	constructive anger					12	1

Appendix D

Database Searches - **Sadness**

Limits applied to each search - Included: peer reviewed, full text available, English language.

Excluded: newspaper articles; book reviews.

Boolean Operators used: the columns **AND** narrow the search; OR widens the search; brackets ( ) group words together with OR, AND; NOT excludes specific words; asterisks* allows variant endings.

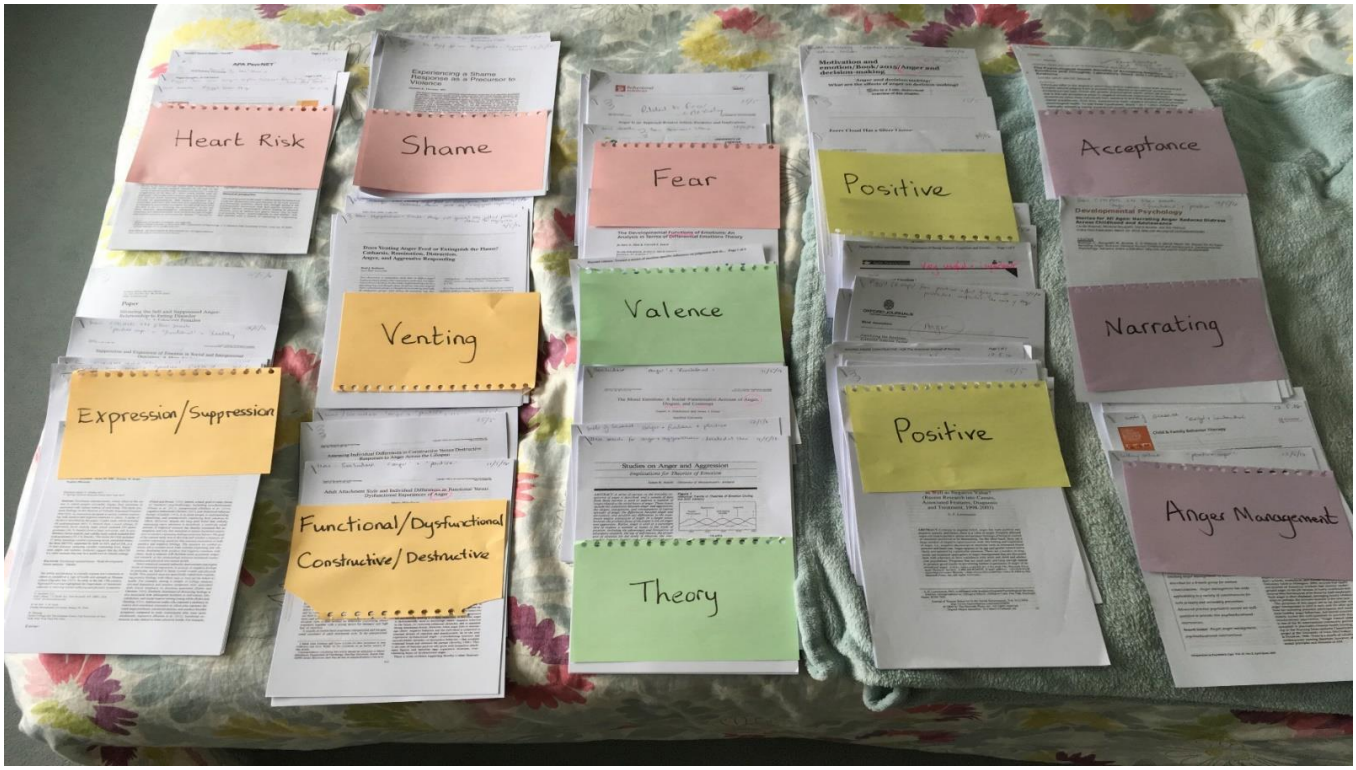
Database		**AND**		**AND**		Results	Usable Research
University Advanced Library Search	sadness		positive benefits		(health OR well-being)	40,456	Too many -need to refine.
	sad*				(positive benefits OR health OR well-being)	945,595	As above
	sadness		positive benefits			40,900	27/300
	sadness		functional			34,191	9 /300
	valuing		sadness			4,590	4/400
SocIndex	sadness		positive effects			14	2
	sadness		positive benefits			2	0
	sadness		positive emotions			56	2
	sad*		(well-being OR wellbeing OR well being)			199	0
	sad*		function*		(well-being OR wellbeing OR well being)	0	
	sad*		function*		(well-being OR wellbeing OR well being OR life satisfaction OR happiness OR life quality OR wellness)	77	2
	sad*		function*		(well-being OR wellbeing OR well being OR life satisfaction OR happiness OR life quality OR wellness) NOT depression	58	5

Appendix D (cont)

Database		AND		AND		Results	Useable
PsycInfo	sadness		positive benefits			11	1
	sadness		benefits			246	7
	sad* OR grief		(benefits OR advantages OR positive effects)		(wellbeing or well-being or well being or quality of life or wellness or health or positive affect or mental health)	1,109	7/400
	sad*		positive effects			284	1
	sad*		positive effects		(wellbeing OR well-being OR well being OR wellness)	23	0
	sad*		function*		(wellbeing OR well-being OR well being OR wellness)	145	4
EThOS	sad*					267	7
Chester Rep	sad* OR negative emotions		function*			974	0
IBSS	valuing		sadness			219	1
	health		sadness			3,522	6/329
	positive effects		sadness			3,126	5/300
	sadness		suppression			437	3/300
CINAHL	sadness		positive benefits			0	
	sad*		positive benefits			0	
	sadness					0	
	sadness		valuing			0	
	sadness				(wellbeing OR well-being OR well being OR quality of life OR wellness OR life satisfaction OR life quality)	0	
CPJ	sadness		benefits			0	
	sadness		valuing			0	
	sadness		well-being			0	
Psyc Articles	sadness		positive effects			17	3
	sadness		valuing			1	0
	sadness				(wellbeing or well-being or well being or life quality or quality of life or health or happiness or mental health)	293	2

Appendix E

Anger - first sort.



Initial categories were identified from the title and the abstract.

Colour codes for the grouping of the **initial categories** were as follows:

Pink – painful or unhealthy issues

Orange – behaviour

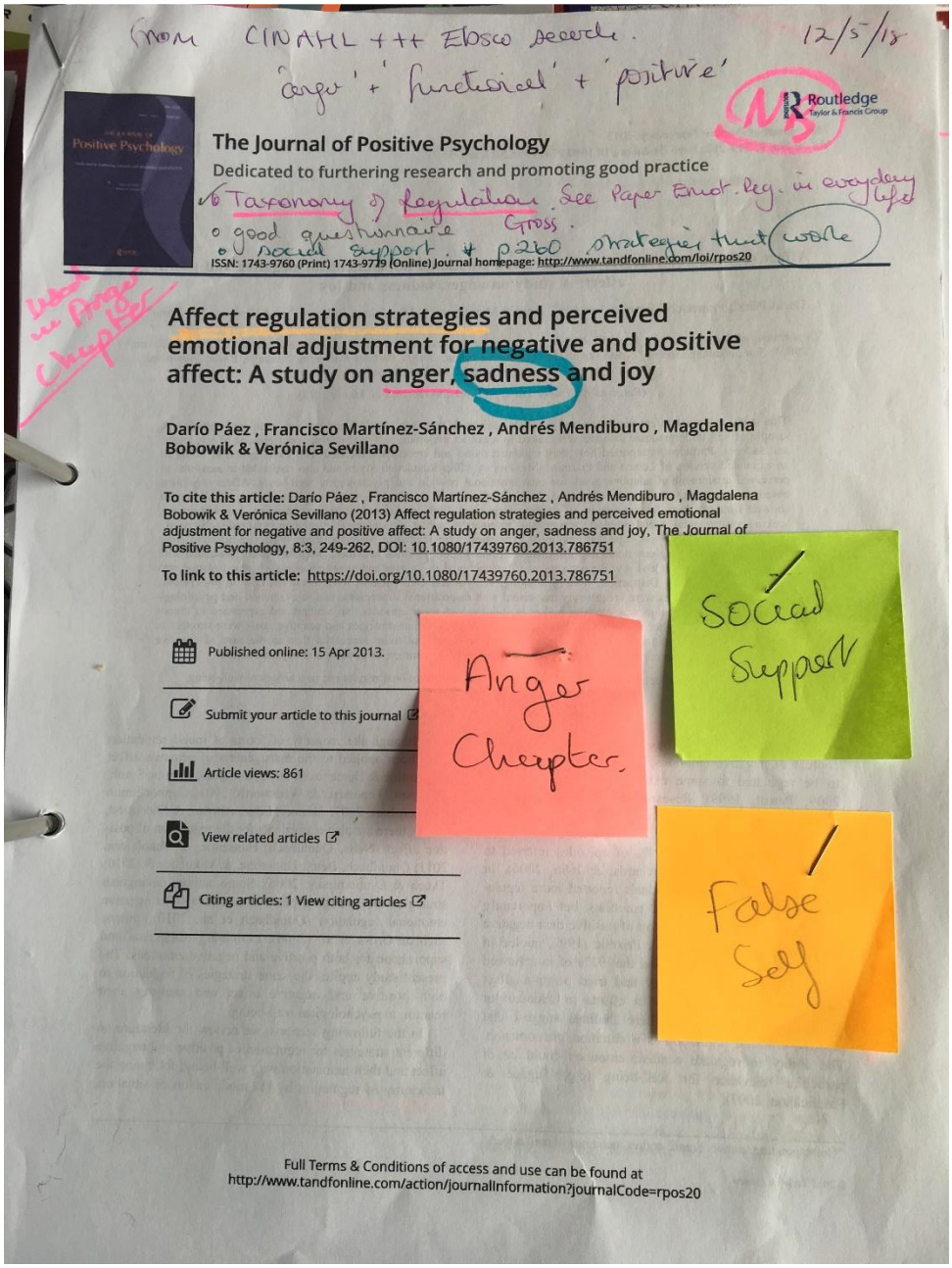
Yellow – positive findings

Green – theory, information

Purple – healthy solutions

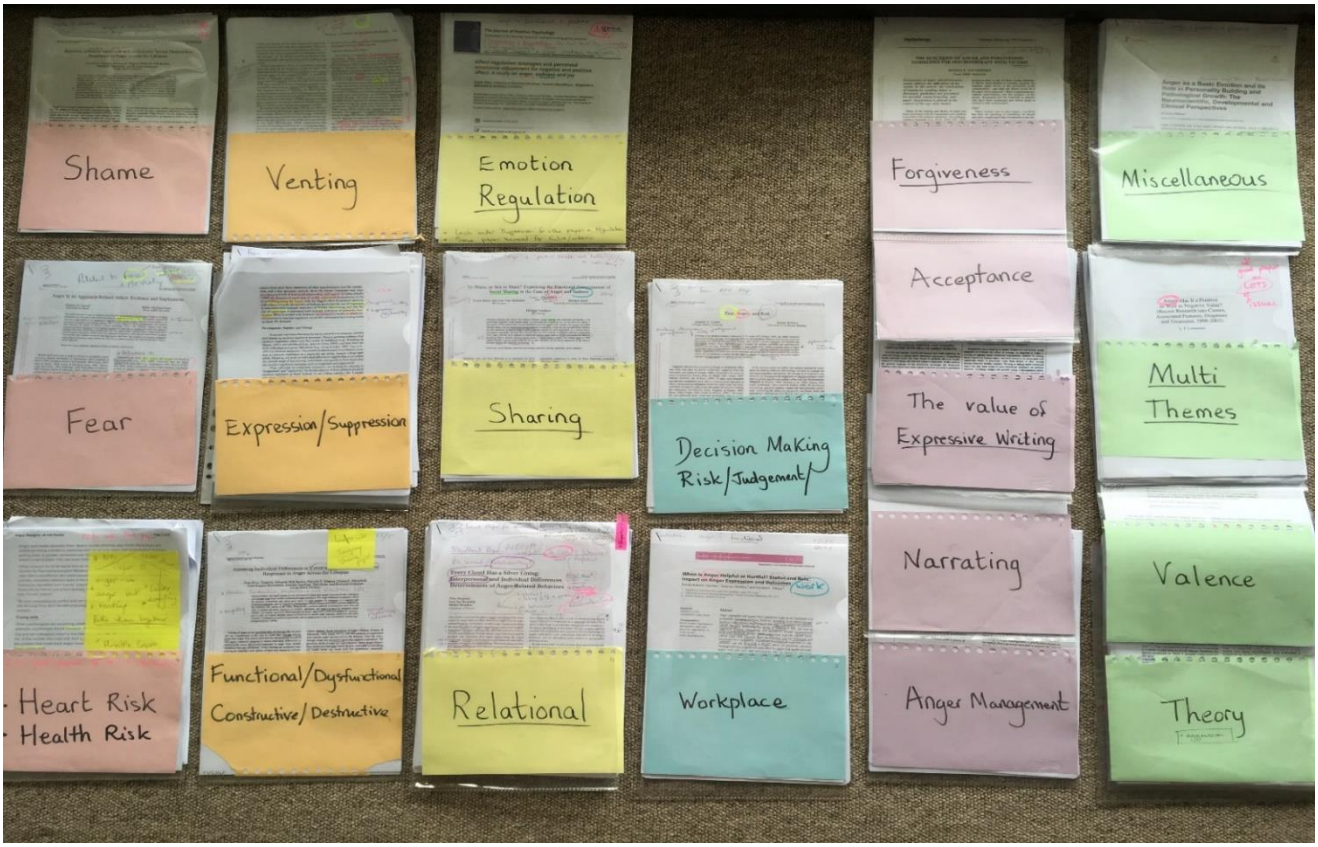
Appendix F

Example of labelling and colour coding used throughout.



Appendix G

Anger - second sort.



Candidate themes were identified from the in-depth data analysis process.

Colour codes for the grouping of the **candidate themes** were as follows:

Pink – painful, unhealthy issues

Orange – behaviour

Yellow – relationships, sharing, emotion regulation

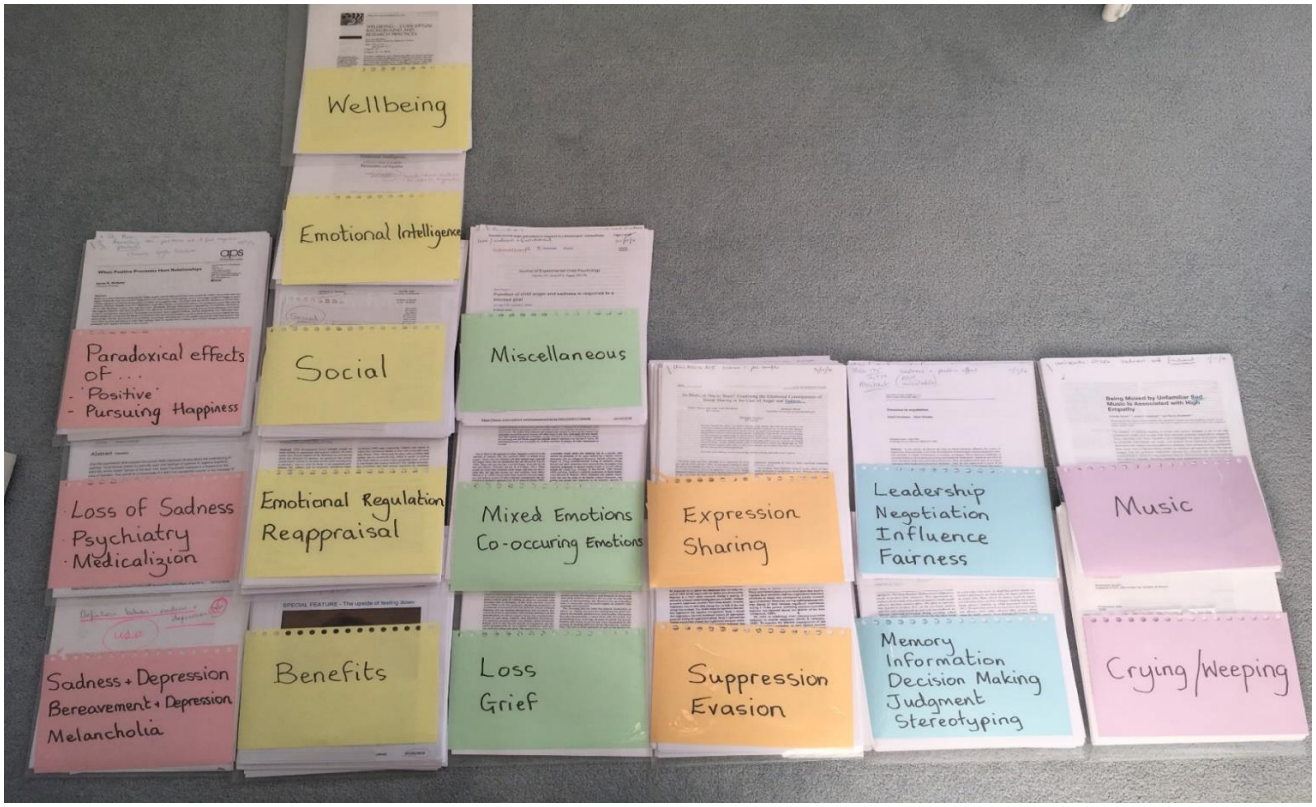
Blue – cognition, workplace

Purple – healthy solutions

Green – theory, multi-themes, miscellaneous

Appendix H

Sadness sort*.



Themes were identified from the in-depth data analysis process.

Colour codes for the grouping of the candidate themes were as follows:

Pink – depression, psychiatry, paradoxical effects

Yellow – benefits, social, health and well-being strategies

Orange – behaviour

Green – grief, mixed emotions, miscellaneous

Blue – cognition, workplace

Purple – specific expressive/receptive strategies

*The categories from the first sort and the second sort remained the same apart from the theme of psychotherapy emerging from the second more refined in-depth process.

Appendix I

The data corpus containing the themes

Colour codes for the **data corpus** were as follows:

Red – anger

Orange – behaviour

Yellow – relationships, social, cultural

Green – information, miscellaneous

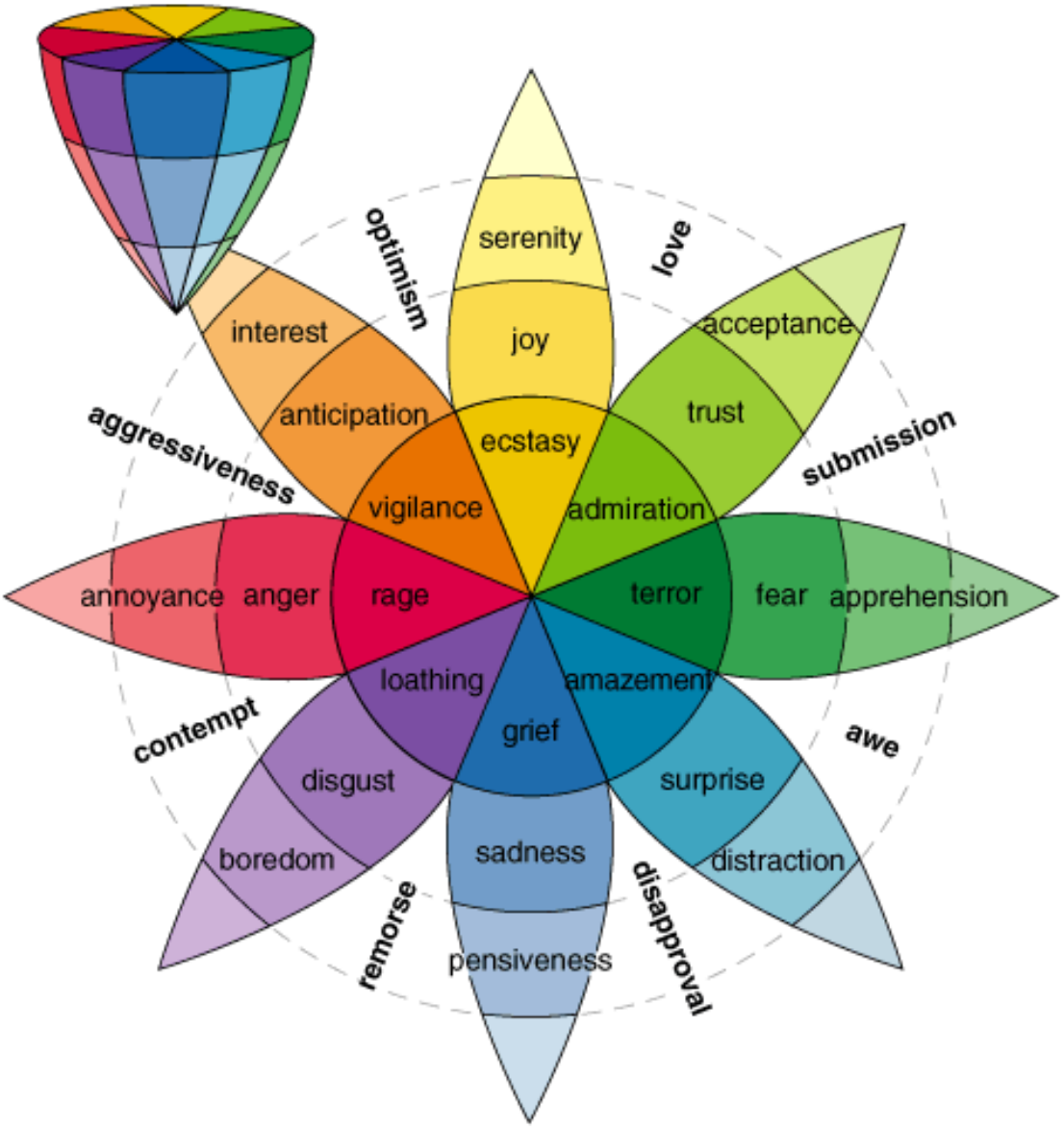
Blue – sadness

Magenta – gender

Purple – healthy solutions, psychotherapy

Appendix J

Wheel of emotions. (Plutchik, 1980)



Plutchik's, 1980, conical shape model and flower-like two-dimensional diagram representing his grouping of 32 emotions (cited in Kringelbach & Phillips, 2014, p. 37).

Retrieved from "Six emotional states", by Rhinegold publishing, from https://shop.rhinegold.co.uk/products/six-emotional-states